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Prostitutes and Aids; The Chancellor's not for turning
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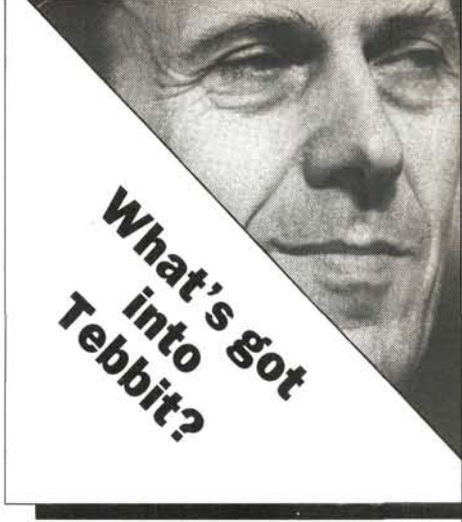

What's got into Tebbit?

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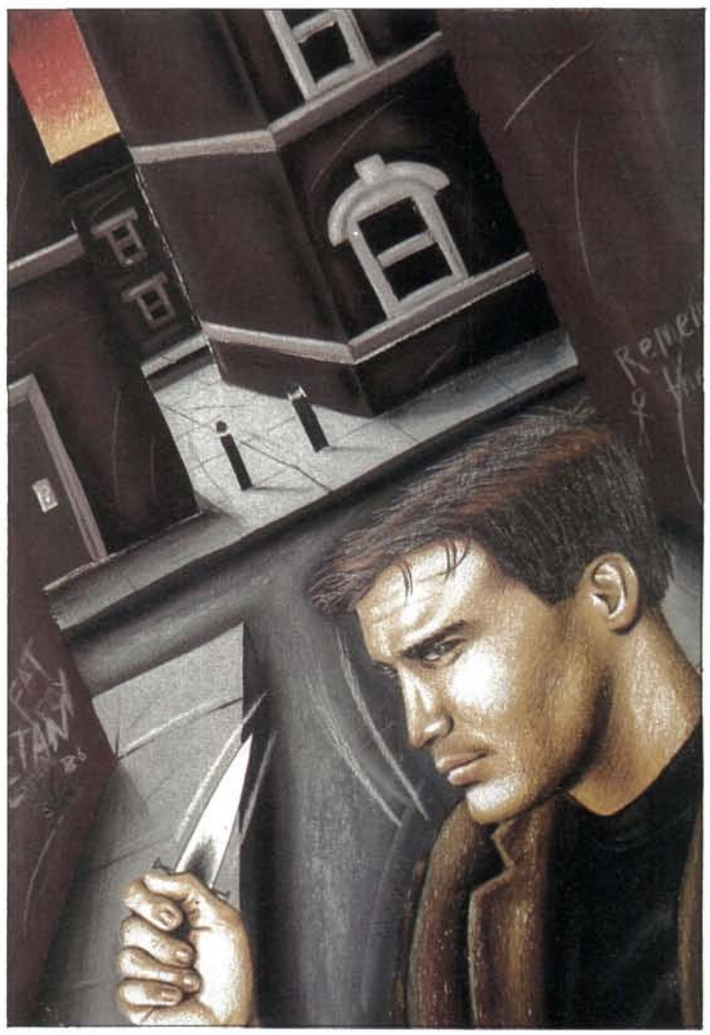

'Everyone who goes into the inner city is horrified — but carping on and on about what the police might do is ignoring the problem'

Commander Larry Roach

Illustration: Shane McGowan

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Vol 112 No 2903 14 November 1986

CONTENTS

FEATURES

Peter Kellner: Pressures on Waldheim to atone for the past 5
Sarah Benton: What can law-makers and police do about rising crime? 6
Victor Sebestyen: Budapest diary 11
Jolyon Jenkins & Patrick Forbes corner Tebbit 12
Andrew Lumsden: Listen to prostitutes on Aids 14
Matthew Hoffman: How I became a free-marketeer 15
Bruce Kent: The Iceland mists 16
Jan Toporowski: Lawson adopts Labour policy? 17
Norman Willis: Are our broadcasters running scared? 19
Jonathan Mirsky: China's rapprochement with Washington and Moscow 20
Roy Hattersley and **Peter Hennessy:** Suez, turning point of history 21

ARTS

Judith Williamson: Cinema 23
Hugo Williams: Television 24
Stephanie Jordan: Dance 24
Charles Fox: Sounds of sax 25
Andrew Clements: Sounds of Sacks 25
Naseem Khan: Work in progress 26

BOOKS

Eamonn McArdle: Sartre 27
Nick Kimberley: Crime 28
Steven Rose: Evolution 29
Alison Smith: Poem 30
Richard Deveson: Milan Kundera 30
Justin Wintle: Gabriel Garcia Marquez 31

BACKCHAT

Liz Heron: Coming home 36
Colin Spencer: Fish for Christmas 37
Crossword 37
Weekend competition 38
Ralph Edney: new cartoon strip 39
George Botterill: Chess 39
This England 39

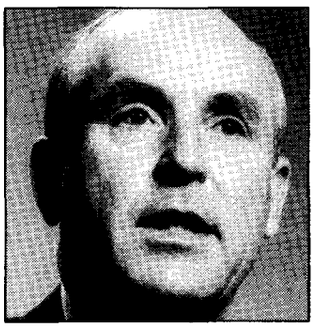
PLUS

Roger Woddis 11
Christian Clark: new cartoon strip 20
Letters 32

NEXT WEEK

Star Wars has thrown up more uncertainty than any issue since the nuclear arms race began. The *NS* has talked to a senior SDI planner, a top Soviet arms control expert and a disillusioned US H-bomb designer for an exclusive cover story
Plus: crime, pt 2

Stealing clothes



THE CBI has made its support for the government unequivocal. That should be a surprise: depressingly, it is not.

Mr David Nickson (right), the CBI's president, told his conference on Monday that higher taxes would cause a 'new brain drain' and would 'torpedo the prospects of Britain's industrial recovery for good'. He added that any wholesale repeal of the three employment/industrial relations acts brought in by the Conservatives would 'put the clock back 10 years'.

His remarks were made on the same day (Monday) that Gavin Laird, the engineering union's general secretary, addressed the conference: he talked of the management/union relationship as being one which was 'a working relationship between organisations striving to solve problems'. Laird, a Labour Party loyalist, will have been embarrassed by Nickson's speech: his fellow Scot and close friend, John Smith, Labour's trade and industry spokesman, had to issue snorts of disapproval of Nickson's comments, saying they were 'silly' and 'hypocritical'.

For all that Laird was right to say what he did, right to go to the CBI. Any future government will have to assume a working relationship between capital and labour: it has no choice. When Laird said that management and unions often 'blame the other side for our own failings while our foreign competitors walk away with the prize — namely, market share' he was doing no more than pointing to an obvious fact. Britain's industry does not need just more investment, more research and development, lower interest rates — it also needs an ever-closer relationship between management and unions, and an agreement between both that higher skill levels, higher productivity and higher output must be common goals.

In so saying, he was a much better spokesman for British industry than Nickson. For the plain fact is that Nickson was calling for opposition to policies which are aimed at redressing some of the damage done over the past seven years by the party which the CBI now wishes its members to support. Investment in British industry is now actually running at levels below that required simply to replace clapped-out machinery. Spending on training dived in the first years of this government — and even now most training is only of the make-work, keep-em-off-the streets kind. Both government and industry spending on research and development is far below that of our major competitors, and in some sectors it is being cut further. There are huge doubts as to whether manufacturing industry is now able to take up the challenge of 'filling the gap' left by the drop-off in oil production — a drop which may be quite sharp, since the decline in the oil price has meant an end to much exporation, hence few new fields are likely to be opened up.

On what basis, then, can the CBI ask its members to support this government? On the hope that something will turn up next time round? On the fear that another government will expect it to deliver? On the expectation that the happy twinning of high wage rises and large tax cuts for the executive classes may not survive a change of government? These are some of the likely reasons: they cannot commend themselves beyond the CBI's ranks.

But the opposition parties *are* faced with a problem. The Chancellor's statement last week *did* steal many of their clothes — especially of a Labour Party which has been anxious not to be seen as irresponsible, and which has been discomfited to see how far Nigel Lawson was prepared, or was forced, to cast aside a posture which the opposition had characterised as rigid and as possessing the force of holy writ.

What to do? Fulminate over a U-turn and lack of political principle? Or risk being labelled irresponsible by going much further than the Chancellor? Nickson's remarks were, consciously or not, a marker that if the latter course were followed, the CBI would line up with government in pious condemnation.

The Chancellor's statement, and the urgent needs of the British economy, leave the opposition parties little choice. First, the elementary point must be made that the monetarist principles which were once enshrined at the heart of the Thatcher revolution, and which imbued every action with a kind of Puritan morality, have simply gone. If the Conservatives can so easily disregard their own creation, why does anyone else need to pay it any mind at all? The spending measures, especially on infrastructure, on training and education, on investment, must be bold — the more so since it can be argued that the increased employment thus generated will help pay for the spending — a point made well by Nigel Lawson himself, last week.

Within that, of course, there has to be a political strategy aimed at getting power. Taxes can't be put up by much. An incomes policy won't be available, so shouldn't be talked up as the centrepiece of any strategy.

But to convince, now, an alternative has to *be* an alternative. Neither the government, nor the CBI, has any kind of track record over the past seven years which would allow them the high ground in that argument. □

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The myth

Oxbridge is stuck. Carrying round a Brideshead mythology like a leper's bell, it is unable to attract an equal share of the available student population; but it cannot begin to explode the mythology until it attracts those wary state school pupils in the first place. It alienates the very people it must woo for the nourishment of its egalitarian image. Last term, a Cambridge student radio programme asked people in the town what they thought they needed to get into Oxbridge. The answers were uniform: 'Money. Big houses in the country and all that; rich dads.' No amount of argument would change opinions based on years of silent, suspicious observation and sustained by a nutritious media diet. Geoffrey Skelsey, Cambridge University's Press Relations officer, comments with frustation: 'They really believe that *all* the people here are riding to hounds and popping champagne bottles. To the bright young kid in Toxteth, Oxbridge may as well be on the moon.'

The arrangement

Oxbridge is divided about equally between former public school and former state school pupils. Compared to most universities, this is a wildly disproportionate student population, an imbalance rivalled only by a handful of other universities — Exeter, Durham, Edinburgh. Inevitably, the public schools have the upper hand with admissions, honing and polishing their pupils for Oxbridge entrance (about 60 Etonians gain admission to the two universities every year) smoothing their contacts at countless college dinners. I will never forget a Christchurch don once saying to me, 'We have an *arrangement* with Charterhouse, you know.'

The wealth

The problem is that an unequal social composition is encrusted within hierarchical, sometimes anachronistic, structures. Students find themselves in the midst of huge and rich organisations, colleges like Trinity, Cambridge, whose annual income is well over £5 million pounds; colleges with vast wine cellars, bottles of their own college port, and boozy, antique fellows like something out of Kingsley Amis' new novel; colleges with large forces of servile labour, from waiters to workers, cleaners to cooks. (It is significant that at several American universities, like Yale and Princeton, students are co-opted by rota to clear away and serve each other at meals.) Then there are the all-male dining societies, the all-public school clubs (the Pitt at Cambridge, the Gridiron at Oxford) and a handy class-language available: so and so is a Narg (Not a Real Gentleman) or a Tharg (someone who Thinks He's a Real Gentleman).

The symbols

What Oxbridge does not realise is that to many potential applicants these structures, even the buildings themselves, have become ideological symbols. When students at Oxford and Cambridge have fun — and this is nearly all students, not just the most privileged — they do so within recognisable public-school patterns: May Balls, Marquees, free Moet, tickets at £100, or Pimms-drenched garden parties behind high college walls.

Can we really know the extent to which, for some, Trinity Great Court ('Did you see the great run in *Chariots of Fire*?') or Christchurch Quad ('It was *that* window which Sebastian Flyte vomited through. Yes I saw it too. Such a good film.'), have become awesome social symbols, perhaps even symbols of social injustice.

The history

It is like establishing a new university based on an equality of admission and opportunity at, say, Eton, while retaining half the schoolboy population, the school CCF and Eton tails. It is not possible: an immediate friction begins, and it begins before people arrive.

Geoffrey Skelsey admits that Oxbridge is, to some extent, crippled by its history. 'There is a belief,' he says, 'that things should go on as they have done because they have done,' and he points to the present Ruskin College furore as an example of a generalised class conflict, between a politically active body of students and a constipated, politically compromised college authority.

'Students at Ruskin are mature students, politically committed ones. And they are in opposition to college and university authorities with different political intentions. If you're in charge of an institution receiving a lot of money from the DES and all that, you have to learn to sit on the fence, or worse, follow the government or establishment line. That's what's happened here: the authorities have been afraid to tell students to toe the line or to tell David Selbourne to toe the line.'

The media

And many see Oxford's hostility to the press over this affair as a way of hitting back for the hysterical Olivia Channon coverage. A way of hitting back for years of media mythologising. Most people's ideas of Oxbridge are the media's, and of course the media find the ordinary quotidian existence conveniently hard to document.

'Olivia Channon was another nail in the coffin,' says Skelsey, 'but you can't really blame the press. Their job, the tabloids' job, is to perpetuate stereotypes, to sell papers by selling dreams, if you like. I'm sure that Oxford's sick of seeing men in raincoats loitering on street corners. Channon followed by Ruskin — for all the differences between them, it isn't good.'

The industry

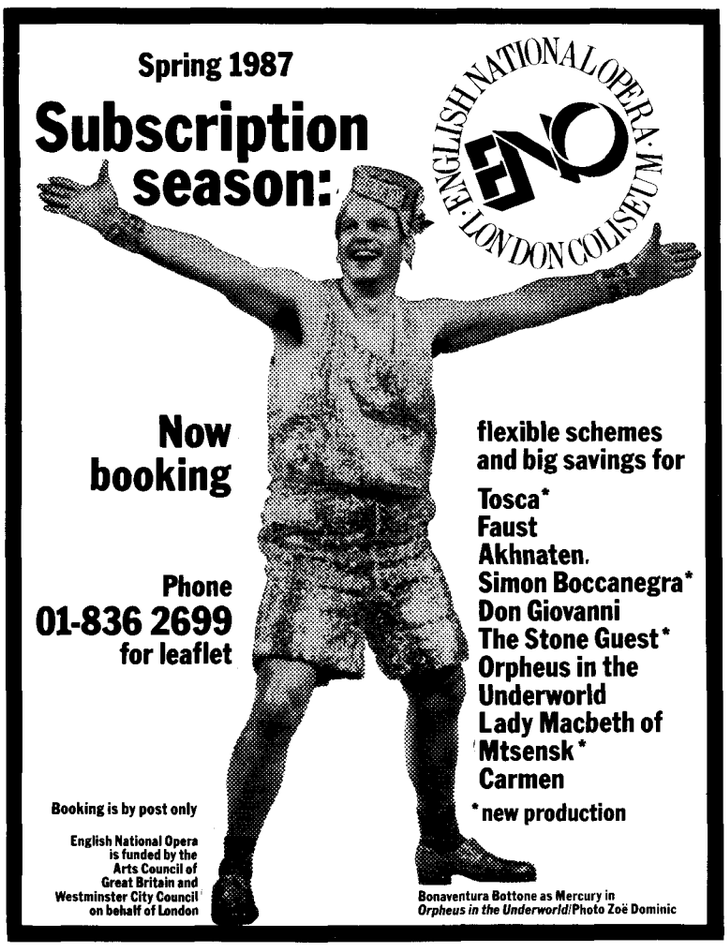
And it's not just the press of course. It is possible to identify a whole industry involved in the production of Oxbridge nostalgia *as contemporary reality*; films like *Brideshead, Chariots of Fire, The Glittering Prizes*, the Queen's documentary, records of King's College Chapel Choir, even the novels of E. M. Forster. So in a cruel ironic twist, media of all kinds not only reflect the half-true myths they see, but *produce* those very myths they record.

The task

Oxbridge needs to take drastic measures to break the links of this chain. Applicants, trapped in this potent world of fact, media myth and genuine mystery, need information and they need demystification. Happily, several Oxbridge colleges (notably Queen's and King's at Cambridge) are developing exchange schemes, producing special brochures, and encouraging new contacts with isolated state schools. King's has gone further than anyone, abolishing high table, formal hall and gowns. But it's a massive task and a slow one. There is still a huge distance between here and Toxteth.

James Wood

James Wood is Editor of Cambridge University's Stop Press.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Bonaventura Bottone as Mercury in Orpheus in the Underworld/Photo Zoë Dominic

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PETER KELLNER

Waldheim takes his first steps to atone for Austria's past

FOR TEN YEARS Kurt Waldheim was Secretary-General of the United Nations. Today, as President of Austria, he is dishonoured almost as widely as he was once honoured. George Shultz, the US Secretary of State, refused to meet him during last week's conference in Vienna on East-West Security. Israel has withdrawn its ambassador from Austria. Members of the American Jewish Committee visited Austria this summer; they too refused to meet Waldheim.

Two leading British Jews, however, did meet the Austrian President privately this summer. This is the story of that meeting and what followed.

Waldheim was elected as Austria's President in May. His election campaign brought into the open allegations about what he did as a German officer in the war. At the very least Waldheim's account of his war record leaves much to be desired. In his autobiography, *In the Eye of the Storm*, he says that he wounded his leg on the Russian front, returned home and played no further part in the war.

When evidence began to surface that he had served in the Balkans, where many German atrocities were committed, he responded that it would have been boring to include this episode in his memoirs. Then more specific information came to light. It showed that he had been a supply officer at the headquarters of the West Bosnian Battle Corps, which had been formed to obliterate partisans in the Kozara area. At first Waldheim insisted that he had been 120 miles away. Then, last month, his office admitted that he had indeed served at Kozara.

So it goes on: documents bearing his signature or initials show that he must have been aware of the mass deportation of Jews from Salonika. He may have been no more than a minor cog in the Nazi war machine; but he was certainly a knowledgeable cog.

SHORTLY after Waldheim was elected President he began to try and repair the damage to his, and Austria's, international reputation that his election campaign had caused. The charge stands that what he has done is far too little, far too late — but the attempt has begun.

He invited two leading British Jews to Vienna to seek their advice on how to rebuild bridges with the international Jewish community. The first was Sir Sigmund Sternberg. Sternberg was born in Hungary; today he is a successful businessman *and* active Labour Party supporter. More to the point, he is the chairman of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) — an organisation in the forefront of the ecumenical movement. Earlier this year the Pope made Sternberg a Knight Commander of St Gregory the Great; this is the highest honour that can be awarded to a non-Christian.

Waldheim's second invitee was Lord Weidenfeld, the publisher. Weidenfeld is a contemporary of Waldheim's; both men grew up in Vienna. They first knew each other when they studied together at Vienna's Konsular Akademie in the late 1930s. Weidenfeld has published Waldheim's books in Britain — including *In the Eye of the Storm*, with its incomplete account of Waldheim's war record.

Sternberg and Weidenfeld agreed to meet Waldheim, but they refused to fly to Vienna. They felt that this would carry the implication that they were supplicants in the President's office, seeking charity. Instead they insisted on a more neutral venue: a hotel (as opposed to a government building) in Salzburg (as opposed to Vienna).

The meeting took place over lunch on 21 August. Others present included Fritz Molden and Bernhard Servatius. Molden was a member of the Austrian resistance during the war. He subsequently became a successful publisher and is now President of the Association of Austrians Abroad.

Dr Servatius succeeded Axel Springer as chairman of the Springer group of companies. In Britain the group is best known as the publisher of racy, right-wing newspapers like *Bild Zeitung*. However, there is another face to the Springer empire. The Springer Foundation has helped a number of Jewish causes over the years. The fight against anti-semitism in Austria is a cause that the foundation might well support.

> ***"The issue goes beyond Waldheim's personal responsibility. It concerns a nation's officially authorised amnesia"***

STERNBERG and Weidenfeld were aware that they faced criticism for meeting Waldheim at all. Sternberg's view, he told me this week, was that — in the words of one of the ecumenical movement's sayings — 'all life is meeting'. The purpose of the Waldheim lunch was neither to prove the Austrian President's guilt nor to underwrite his innocence. It was to discuss practical steps that could now be taken to combat anti-semitism inside Austria and to improve the country's image abroad.

A number of suggestions emerged: a memorial in Vienna to victims of the holocaust; a museum showing the Jewish cultural contribution to Austrian life; a major international conference in Vienna on the roots and nature of anti-semitism. The possibility was floated of creating an international committee headed by the Mayors of Vienna and Jerusalem to oversee this work.

Waldheim gave his support to these proposals and asked Sternberg and Weidenfeld to pursue them, in the first instance in co-operation with the Austrian Embassy in London. On 18 September Dr Reginald Thomas, the Austrian ambassador, hosted a meeting attended by Sternberg; Lilian Hochhauser, chairman of the British-Israel Arts Foundation; Clemens Nathan, President of the Anglo-Jewish Association; Aubrey Rose, a member of the Board of Deputies of British Jews; and Mrs Ruth Weyl, secretary to the ICCJ. Each attended in their personal capacity rather than as representatives of their organisations; nevertheless the level of participation was an indication of the importance that leading British Jews attached to the exercise. (And not only Jews: Lord Coggan, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, is honorary President of the ICCJ and has promised Sternberg his full support in this venture.)

Everyone at the September meeting agreed that the first action should be the 'early erection of a fitting memorial in a prominent position in Vienna'. One possibility is that a widely publicised international competition will be held, and that the memorial will be created by 'a sculptor of world renown'. Other steps were discussed; but above all it was agreed that the initiatives had to come from Austria rather than abroad. All foreign Jews can do is offer advice. For this reason, most of the follow-up work from the Salzburg and London meetings is being done by Molden and another former member of the Austrian resistance, Alexander Auer.

MUSEUMS, monuments, lunch-time meetings: they seem piffling affairs compared with the enormity of what what happened during the second world war, and the scale of atonement that is surely due from Austria in general and Waldheim in particular. Two points are worth making. The first is that Austrians go to the polls in ten days time to elect a new government. We must wait until after 23 November to see if the new government in Vienna is willing to make any larger moves to atone for Austria's past.

The second point is that it is far from clear whether *any* Austrian government will ever come properly to terms with what its citizens did in the second world war. This issue goes far beyond Waldheim's personal responsibility. It concerns a nation's officially authorised amnesia: the fact that Austria did not exist between 1938 and 1945; it was part of Germany.

The official Austrian line boils down to this: 'Yes, many Austrians, as individuals, fought for Hitler. But if you seek atonement, or reparations, or restitution from the State — ask the Germans. The Austrian state did not exist at the time; Vienna today cannot be held responsible for what Berlin did then.' Thus the destruction of Austria's Jewish community — its numbers are down from 200,000 in the 1930s to 8,000 today — is consigned to an historical black hole.

Now that the Waldheim affair has revived old memories, it is hard to see that narrow, legalistic defence lasting long. The specific ideas that first surfaced over lunch three months ago in Salzburg are small in themselves. But they could start a chain of events that forces Waldheim and the Austrian government, at long last, to come clean and make amends. □

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CRIME: PART 1

The absence of acceptable authority

Rex Features

Rising crime figures, and faster-rising fear of crime, are now bridging the left-right divide over law and order. This week, in the first of a major two-part report,* SARAH BENTON *explores the official pessimism which now surrounds the search for a solution. Next week, she reports on the new demands for* more *law and order — from the left

WE USED TO SCOFF when old buffers saw vandalism and theft, sexual licence and marriage breakdown, as signs that the political order was breaking down. 'We' means the city dwellers who pushed against the restrictions of marriage and family, of police, school, party bosses. It means the bearers of liberal and socialist values who believed that in the perennial war between the defenders of the establishment old order and the supporters of the new it was the new order which would triumph.

In the eyes of conservatives, this is what has happened. The new order has taken over but it is no order at all. Chaos reigns; the choice is between escape to the Shetland Isles or ushering in a truly authoritarian regime which will make today's government look like the last of the great ditherers.

> Perhaps what is required is a new political party of the Right that would not hesitate to rectify the glaring faults that have developed as a result of our ever-increasing and much trumpeted 'free society' and which have contributed towards our national decline.
>
> *Hove, Sussex*
>
> Earlier this week we came out of the Theatre Royal after an evening of Monteverdi to find ourselves in the middle of a Doré engraving of Hell. The streets were crowded with hooligans. Police chased youths down alleys and over walls with dogs. Blue lights flashed on drunks falling out of pubs. There was running, screaming, barking, glass breaking — Bedlam.
>
> Mr Worsthorne, if you can offer a solution to living in this benighted land which does not involve mass-destruction could you share it with me?
>
> *Limpley Stoke, Bath*

These requests for a final solution without the corpses were presumably fairly typical of the very high response reported by the *Sunday Telegraph* to an article by its 63-year old editor Peregrine Worsthorne. 'King's Road', he had protested, 'once my neighbourhood, is now like a nightmare vision of hell. Punks make me feel sick.' More circumspectly: 'Nor do I share any feelings of affinity with the British Commonwealth, or any of fellowship whatever with many of the new immigrants to this country'

His loyalties are to rural England and American might. Ten years ago, you could dismiss such calls to restore a vanished England (it is always England, never Britain). Today they get a wide hearing. It is no longer just the right which fears that chaos might succeed the old order, it is socialists and liberals too.

MOST PEOPLE SEEM to agree that we have a crisis of law and order that hinges on the absence of acceptable authority. Last year Gallup found that 88 per cent of the population thought violence had increased in the last five years. Over two thirds

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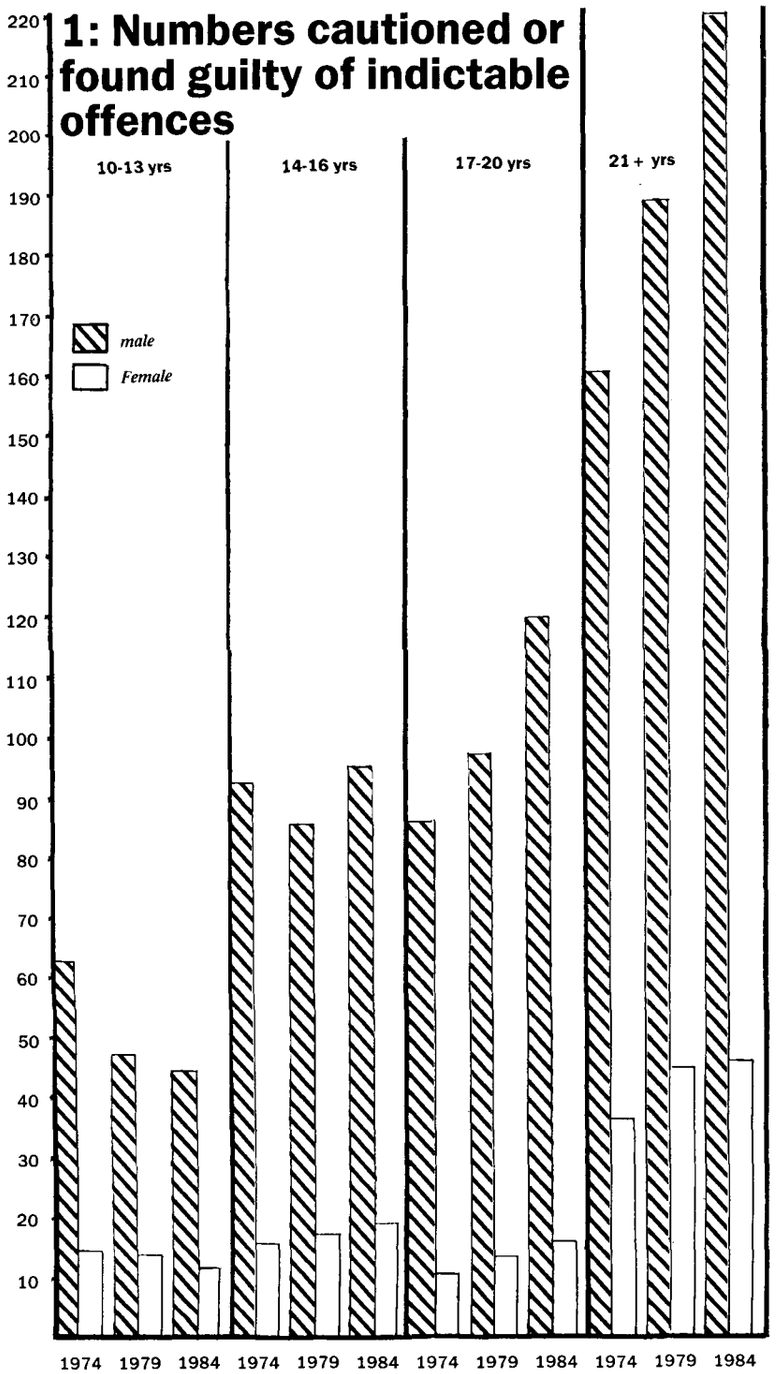
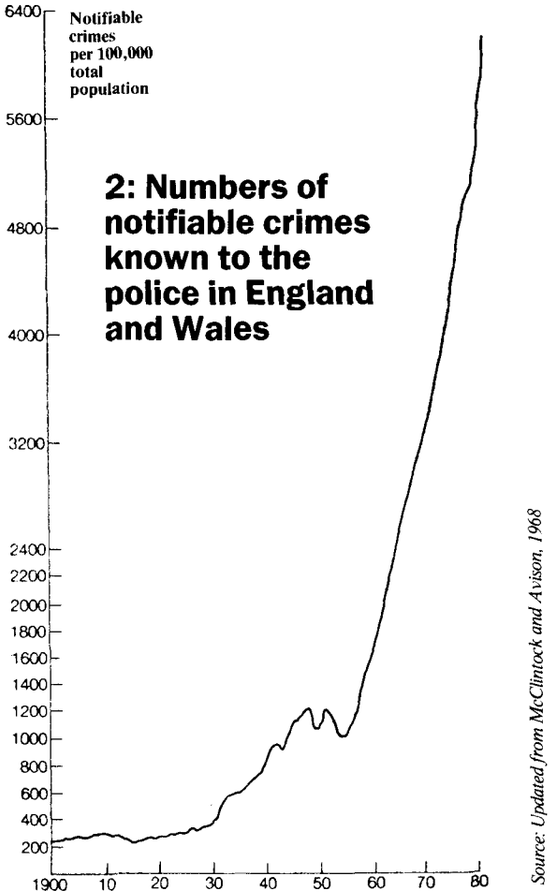

1: Numbers cautioned or found guilty of indictable offences
10-13 yrs
14-16 yrs
17-20 yrs
21 + yrs
male
Female
1974 1979 1984 1974 1979 1984 1974 1979 1984 1974 1979 1984


Notifiable crimes per 100,000 total population
2: Numbers of notifiable crimes known to the police in England and Wales
1900 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Source: Updated from McClintock and Avison, 1968

thought this was mainly due to the 'general breakdown in respect for authority, law and order.' In their preliminary report on the second 'sweep' of the British Crime Survey, Hough and Mayhew say: 'The 1982 survey provided the first national findings on the fear of crime; the 1984 sweep built upon these to examine the sources of fear and the hypothesis that fear has roots in social disorder wider than crime itself.'

Gallup also recorded a growing loss of faith in the criminal justice system, an essential finding if any thesis of a crisis of law and order is to be sustained. Ten years ago, Gallup recorded that 54 per cent of their survey thought the system of law and justice was not fair to everyone; by last year that had increased to 62 per cent. In 1969, 35 per cent of those polled thought the courts favoured the rich; in 1985 that had grown to 50 per cent. Twenty years ago 68 per cent thought the police were efficient and did their job well.

By last year that had fallen to 48 per cent. There was a corresponding rise in the number of people who thought the police occasionally or systematically violent and corrupt. (All surveys of the last few years also show that a growing majority of people think that what Britain urgently neds is more jobs and more public money on education and welfare).

Crime has *not* risen continuously over the past century. Through historical studies are very incomplete there appears to have been a similar pattern of rapidly rising crime and football violence in the 20 or 30 years before World War One. From that war until the mid 1950s there seems to have been a relative social peace. From the end of the 1950s violent crime, petty crime, commercial crime and crowd disorder all seem to have been rising fast; or anyway, faster than the structures of society and state can adapt to or absorb. History provides an antidote both to the High Tory view of a once-and-for-all descent into Hell and the Left's one-time view of a one-sided shift towards an authoritarian State.

In our times, crime figures plus football violence plus riots appear to be the official confirmation of endemic lawlessness. While in 1979 there was still hot disagreement over whether crime was increasing at all, by 1986 there is virtually unanimous agreement that, however you define it, however you measure it, and whatever reasons you offer for it, there is more of it; more acts of crime, more people involved (table 2). Today, one third of all men have a criminal conviction by the time they are 28. That does not include those who are convicted of motoring offences only, nor of course the ones who got away.

THE QUICK MEASURE of crime is the statistic for murder (table 3). Murder is the crime least

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affected by shifting views on what a crime is, whether to report it to the police or how the police should record it. As it's a rare crime, the figure fluctuates wildly, but from the early 1960s it has increased from an average in England and Wales of about 300 a year to its average in the 1980s of about 600 a year.

It has not increased anything like as fast as the thefts and burglaries recorded by police. But even here surveys carried out by the General Household Survey since 1971 and by the British Crime Survey since 1982 show an annual increase in the number of dwellings that are burgled. Of course, the number of dwellings has increased, including those left empty during the day with their cache of videos and hi-fis. But however one accounts for the increase more people have direct or indirect experience of a burglary.

Serious personal assaults, including rape and armed robbery, increased by 38 per cent between 1974 and 1984. While victims of sexual assault are especially likely to keep silent about the crime, there is no reason to attribute most of the rise in violent assault to changes in reporting or recording. The proportion of both murders and serious assaults by strangers has increased and accordingly the detection rate for serious personal assault has gone down.

It is, as everyone knows, more likely that you will be murdered by your parents, sexually assaulted by your father or step father, wounded by a friend or lover than fall victim to a stranger. More children steal from their parents or friends than from strangers, more employees steal from the company than unknown shoplifters or thieves. However damaging such assaults or thefts may be, they do not make people feel society is a dangerous environment.

But when the number of crimes carried out by strangers is increasing, as it is, and the police detection rate is falling, as it is, then the fear that you live in a hostile society, constantly at risk of unpredictable, unknown predators, becomes a pressing political problem. As many have warned, the wealthy will buy their way into private fortresses — there are already more private security guards in Britain than police officers. The rest will be left to scramble for ever scarcer public resources. The very notion of a common public good becomes eroded to the point when it has no persuasive political power at all.

Here there is an emerging new consensus on what crime *is*: the lawless acts of *unskilled* men. But if that is the meaning of crime, most fraud, bribery and corruption, many sexual offences, murder and a lot of domestic violence are written off as non-crime. *Does crime matter because of the money lost*? Fraud nets far more illegal gains than domestic and commercial burglary and goods-off-the-back-of-a-lorry put together. Estimates of current fraud losses a year range from the £1 billion counted in *The Incidence, Reporting and prevention of Commercial Fraud* from the Police Foundation, to the £3 billion a year estimated by accountants Ernst & Whinney.

The British Insurance Association says that total theft losses from insured homes, commercial premises and goods in transit were £186.9 million for 1985. Even if this were doubled to take account of the quarter of households which are not insured

Cont'd on p.10

Passionate Londoner

COMMANDER LARRY ROACH is the head of the Metropolitan Police's community relations division. He has been a police officer all his life, joining as a cadet before becoming a Constable at Harrow Road police station in 1958. He has spent most of his life as a uniformed district based officer.

He is now 47, a tall, thin, good-looking man whose slightly military style, quick impatience and emphatic speech have none of the soft charm one might expect from his reputation as a progressive in the 'soft' side of policing. He has been described as the 'it' of the moment and a possible next Commissioner — if the government of the day decides that the public face of law and order should be 'community policing'.

He is also a passionate Londoner who comes over as a man with a mission to achieve before time runs out. His strictures of the 'them' who have let society down are a better measure of the gap between left reformers and liberal police than the chasm between black community leaders and authoritarian district officers.

Can the police do anything to reduce the level of crime?

The question which I think the modern social commentator is asking is what the relationship between crime and police activity is. Obviously there is some relationship, but what it is we don't know. We have therefore to think through the whole thing again and that's what's been going on. At last and at last; the police have been saying for a very long time that turning to the police service to solve the major social problems of crime, public order and social breakdown in the inner cities has to be done, but you're not going to find those answers in the police service alone.

Does this mean that traditional policing has failed?

One of the great problems we are faced with is that people do not actually listen to what is said to them. I get increasingly irritated with this. Traditional policing was applied in traditional times. Society moves on, the police service goes on with it. What was appropriate in the 1930s is not appropriate in the 1980s any more than the manufacturing methods of newspaper technologies of the '30s are appropriate to the '80s. So what's so special about the police force? It's not a failure of the police. Why do you use the word failure?

You say that 'at last' thinking about policing has changed. What has caused this change?

The police have been saying these things for the last 20 years but people haven't been listening. What has happened is that the problems we've been saying would emerge have emerged. The social problems that have been growing for the last 20 or 30 years are now coming to people's attention. Changes in the way we treat our children, changes in the way we administer our criminal justice system, changes in the social structure, the decline of all the social restraints

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which used to operate, are having effects on people's lives. Now the first reaction of people when they get into these terrible problems — and I suppose it's a compliment to the police — is to look to the police to save them from themselves. But in the end, what we're talking about is major changes in society.

The first major conference on the multi-agency approach was at Bramshill in 1982. What has happened since then?
The changes for the police mean we have to develop skills and techniques for co-operating with other agencies. We're working on that. The police have recognised that. But the serious question is, have the other agencies with whom we have to work recognised it? I see no sign that they have.

The objection that has been raised, by teachers for instance, is that the police simply use the multi-agency approach for surveillance.
That is a total fabrication. Absolutely paranoiac fabrication. Where they get that from I don't know. The ACPO/SEO document* sets out clearly why the police go into schools and what the conditions are, agreed with educationalists. We publish it, we print it, we give it out to people. I wonder if there's any possibility of the National Union of Teachers producing a similar document in which they make their position on this issue as clear and explicit? I think that might be helpful.

Should there be a formal structure in which all th agencies are obliged to take part, with money fo back-up resources?
I'd much rather those other agencies recognise the problem in the way the police recognise tl problem and do some thinking about it. If they c that I think they'll come to the conclusion that th don't need formal structures. Much better th should do something on that basis than be forc to do something. But in the end I think they v find that if we're going to deal with the so al problems of the modern age, if we're going o make the quality of life better for pe le particularly in the inner cities . . . I mean every ne who goes down there is horrified, forgetting at police officers walk about those streets 24 ho s a day. We're not surprised by the conditior of London's inner city. If they're horrified so a we and something needs to be done about it. Bu the carping on and on and on about what the p lice might do, might not do, should think about d ng, is ignoring the problem. There are at least me people who are using that technique to avoid ing anything themselves. They're avoiding heir responsibilities.

You sound angry about it.
My dear, I live in London, I'm a Londoner was born and raised in London. This is *my* town hese are *my* people and I've devoted my whole fe to looking after *my* people and I do not lik o see them living in the conditions they're living now. I do get annoyed, I do get angry to see vhat's happening to *my* home. So does every oth police officer.

As far as you are concerned, has the deb about police accountability finished or will it ntinue until there is a change?
I' e no doubt that those who are charged with p litical responsibility for making those decisions v ll make a decision in the end. But I'm inclined to v nder what that debate has to do with the quality c life for the people of London. All I can say is t at if anybody thinks that making changes in the y ay the police account for themselves is going to l ake any difference at all to the quality of life for ie residents of the inner city then I think they're eluding themselves. OK, it's not for me to say. :'s a matter for the politicians to decide. The olice service will invariably do what parliament ays it should do.

n this and previous annual reports, the Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Newman, has explicitly recognised that there is an issue of accountability and that if the police are not seen to be able to respond to criticism their authority will not be accepted.
Our response to criticism has always been to assume that it's right. And then to examine it. Take racism. People say 'there's racism in the police force' and our reaction is to say 'I wonder if they're right?' But because we don't say 'No, there are no racists' people say 'Ah, as they don't deny it it must be true.' We're trying very hard indeed to be as open as we can, as responsive as we can to the needs of the people of London.

There are many different sorts of crime, from serious organised crime through racial assaults and domestic violence to petty vandalism. How do you decide what your priorities should be?
Obviously, we don't do so alone. Obviously, we want to see those people who are suffering from crime involved in the process of deciding what our priorities should be. Which is what section 106 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, the consultative groups, is about. So we set up consultative groups because that's the way parliament said we should do it. If vandalism or racial assaults are the priority of people in an area, the consultative process will reflect it, and that will be reflected in our planning process. What's important in Ealing is not important in Richmond, what concerns the people of Epsom is not the same as the concerns of Lambeth. So you have to have a devolved structure.

The Commissioner has just reorganised the force, the whole bloody force, to make sure that that kind of authority is at the right level so it can be influenced. We've just gone through two years of the most traumatic reorganisation to make sure that the people who deliver the service, the divisional superintendent, is able to respond to local conditions. What else has anybody else done? Zilch. Nothing. But stand about saying the reason you want consultation is because you want to be spying on us.

The Commissioner made it clear in his last report that he thought much of the criticism was 'ideologically motivated' and had thus lost much public sympathy. Do you think this is true of the black community where there has been some of the highest distress about police insenstivity, to put it at its least?
The black community suffer the most extreme form of deprivation, discriminaton, prejudice in our society. They are the most disadvantaged section of our community. Therefore they display the problems of our society in their most extreme forms. As you see people in all sections of society focusing on the police to solve their problems, I think you see the black community focusing on the police to solve their problems. We're desperately anxious that their problems should be solved. I've been saying *ad nauseam*, to the point of boredom, that we've got to make major social changes to solve the problems of the black community. Their focusing on the police is not helping their case.

Yes, there are examples of police activity which are insensitive, ill-thought-through and sometimes mistaken. But if the black community is going to move on and emerge from its disadvantaged position we've got to make major social change. It's not the way the constable behaves on his beat that is the source of the problem. The source of the problem is the racial attitude of white people. Those of us who have this white skin know what the attitude of your fellow white people is towards black people. That is a major social problem requiring multi-agency action.

Is there not a specific policing role where, for example it is widely believed that some of the violence towards black people is organised? Should you not be seen to be investigating whether, for instance, the National Front is involved?
Two members of the National Front were sent to prison recently as a result of investigations launched by officers of my branch. Did you know that?

No.
Well, what can I say? Ian Russell (the officer concerned) is very upset about it. He didn't half work hard, and did a damn good job, and nobody knows about it. People are only hearing what they want to hear and seeing what they want to see. It's so irritating. On extremist organisations, what would you expect a professional police officer to do other than examine the incidents we've got reported to us to see if there is any connection between them? We're doing that all the time. Nobody has yet produced, apart from their suspicions, the *evidence*. We're looking for it.

On several areas of criticism of the police, it has been suggested that the law is at fault — on the possession of cannabis, or prosecutions for domestic violence for instance. Are there many laws which you feel hinder police/community relations?
Laws are a matter for the political system to decide. Are we now at last beginning to realise that if we want a particular kind of society we have to take responsibility for making sure those laws reflect what you think and the sort of society you want? The police service can no longer adapt the law and criminal procedure to meet changing social needs.

Take cannabis. If it is the view of the majority of people in this country that cannabis should be decriminalised, will they please get on and do it? Until they do we the police service will assume that it is a criminal offence to carry, possess, use that substance, we will continue to enforce the law as you tell us to do. Don't blame us if we have to go around arresting people on the streets for possessing cannabis, blame yourself. It's your law.

If we ever get to the situation where the police service decides which laws are or are not to be enforced, we're in trouble. □

*Liaison between Police and Schools. Associa of Chief Police Officers and the Society of Education Off ;.

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Cont'd from p.8

and the burglaries which are not reported (though in both cases less valuable goods are likely to be involved) the amount stolen in commercial fraud towers above this. Does this mean middle class crime is destroying the fabric of capitalism?

Fraud like bribery and corruption and, at the other end of the scale, domestic violence, is somehow not regarded as *real* crime by many people. As was said when the Lockheed bribery scandal broke, it's just what businesses do. The provision of 'call girls' by large business or Foreign Office staff for their visitors is what is expected of them — not the indictable crime of procuring. Walloping their wives was seen for many years as what husbands did. Many private companies prefer to cover up evidence of fraud or bribery because it makes the company look bad.

FEMINISTS have argued against this distinction between a private immorality and public crime. But crime is still largely defined as the wrong doing of the working class for obvious reasons. White collar crime has less personal impact. And the middle class has more private resources to absorb the effects of wrongdoing, for instance private clinics to keep its drug addicts or alcoholics out of the vortex of street crime and violence.

But it is working-class crime which is seen to threaten law andorder. This merely point to the fact that it is a 'disciplined' working class on which the stability of the state depends.

Here the sociological analyses come into force again. The social disciplines of working class life, particularly those created not just by full employment, but a stable hierarchy within employment, reinforced by trade unions with their built in hopes of pushing up living standards, are destroyed by mass unemployment, the poverty and hopelessness that go with it. The 'shedding of labour' is, in some industries, particularly directed at undermining the strengths of skilled labour — the stabilising *hierarchy* of work — and at the power of trade unions to deliver better standards of living for their members.

There is a comforting view that as most petty crime is committed by young people, the level of crime will go down as the proportion of young people in the population shrinks. But the proportion has been decreasing for the last ten years, and crime has gone up.

From Table 1 you can see that less crime is committed by young people. The belief that the vast majority of young men 'grow out of crime', finding their jobs, wives, children, do-it-yourself more attractive, is a belief based on the days of hope and full employment. What incentive is there for a 20 year old, habitually dependent on crime, to opt for a 'respectable' life on the dole when he is 25? He has no prospect of getting a job; the dole will never buy him the clothes and furniture and home that those made redundant at 50 have already acquired. He has little to gain by becoming 'respectable.'

A study published by the Home Office last year on *Parental Supervision and Juvenile Delinquency* explored how far high offending rates were to do with poor parental supervision. Something to do with it, concluded authors David Riley and Margaret Shaw. But as far as boys are concerned 'once account was taken of the kind of friends the teenagers had, then parental knowledge of the details of how they spend their spare time was unrelated to the chances of their being delinquent'. In other words, peer groups have more influence than parents, the inducements of a 'delinquent' network more sway than parental warnings. Parents are right: he got in with the wrong lot, your honour.

In fact, parents don't really see their job as being to stop their children becoming criminals. This study found not only that parents had far less idea of where there children were than they thought their did; but also their advice to children was much more to do with protecting them or maintaining a good relationship with them than policing their time out of the home.

Thus, parents tended to supervise girls more closely, and give them advice about sex far more frequently, than they did their sons. This was not out of the hurt they thought ill-supervised girls might do to others, but out of the hurts that might happen to the girls — or a belief that girls' sexual freedom threatens the family, rather than the State.

THIS IS the fatal flaw in what has become the official policy on crime in the last few years. It is called crime prevention, and it is to be achieved by the 'multi-agency approach'.

It began with a seminar at Bramshill in 1982 convened by Home Office official Sir Brian Cubbon, backed up by an official circular to police, schools, social services, housing departments and others. A variant of it — what Vivien Stern, the director of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, calls 'locks and things' — was the theme of the Prime Minister's seminars on crime prevention; if you lock everything up, it can't get stolen, ergo no more theft.

Short, sharp, useless

'It is now accepted that the impact of the criminal justice system on the actual level of offending is low; it role is essentially symbolic' writes Stephen Shaw, director of the Prison Reform Trust in *Crime UK*, one of the Policy Journals series. He is saying what other criminologists have said: that the criminal justice system is 'rhetorical', more to do with a public discourse on law and order than effective measures on crime. When Tory ministers rise at Tory Party conferences to announce with a flourish the latest deterrent — short sharp shocks, minimum life-sentences — most of those trying to make the system work are merely cynical.

The multi-agency approach is a tacit official recognition that the causes of crime are social, though these will range from the social 'culture of permissiveness' amongst parents and teachers favoured by the right, to mass unemployment, crummy housing and a general loss of hope favoured by the left. It also involved using victim surveys, begun in the USA in the 1960s and increasingly popular in Britain in the 1980s, to find out where most crime is committed and who is most affected. Crime Prevention strategies can then be targeted. A special police Crime Prevention Unit has been set up the Home Office to monitor and advise on such strategies.

The discovery that the main victims of crime are the poor has made this a popular new starting point in urban regeneration. In fact, the evidence obtained by the authors of the Islington Crime Survey is not quite as comforting to the white middle class as they had assumed. Young white women are nine times more likely to be sexually assaulted than black, those earning £8-12,000 a year 3½ times more likely than those earning under £8,000 (because, say the survey's authors, they have enough money to go out but not enough to go out by car).

Those living in Islington's Mildmay ward, with its new, highly visible pockets of gentrification, were over eight times more likely to be burgled than those in the uniformly working class Holloway. In fact, so detailed is the breakdown that sometimes no clear picture emerges: according to the table, squatters, those earning over £12,000 a year, young Asian women are each the *most* likely victims of theft from the person. Taking just age, race and sex (and not income or housing tenure) the Islington Survey found that in all groups except white people over 45, women were more likely to be victims than men and that, with the exception of Asian women, the likelihood of being a crime victim decreases the older you get.

Amongst young people (under 25) victimisation rates for white and black men, and for white and black women were the same, for both Asian men and women were lower, and for other non-white men and women notably higher. However, all of the tables showed that the very poor were *less* likely to be crime victims than those who were better off. If criminals are largely drawn from the 'lumpenproletariat' they do not merely prey on each other's impoverished persons.

IN ANOTHER shift in official thinking, again taking its lead from the USA, the focus of crime prevention work is the 'fear of crime' as much as the incidence of crime. Fear of crime, conclude both the radical criminologists and the Home Office's pamphlet on the issue, is not based on a realistic assessment of how likely a crime is, but an assessment of how much damage the crime would do if it did occur. Hence the finding in every survey that women's fear of rape always tops any poll of fear of crime.

Who can argue with the idea that if architects and social services, housing managers and schools as well as the police all did their visible bit to make crime less easy to carry out and get away with it we would all sleep easier in our beds? If we all took responsibility for making life safer, we would all *feel* less afraid.

But the multi-agency approach is unlikely to work. Commander Roach *(see page 8)* head of the London Metropolitan Police's community relations, speaks angrily of the other agencies. They have, he says, 'done zilch'. He is particularly sharp about the teachers who complain that the police use their cooperation in order to spy on pupils but do absolutely nothing themselves.

But the flaw with the multi-agency approach, whether it entails parents or teachers or the social services, is that welfare agencies do not see crime prevention as their job. If it is their job, then that is saying that crime is *the* endemic problem of the 1980s; crime has so overwhelmed all other social processes that dealing with it must be the priority for every institution in society. That is truly a strategy for a law and order state. □

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BUDAPEST DIARY

My parents Chose Freedom in 1956 assuming (mistakenly as it turned out) that they were choosing prosperity too. We've got freedom, whatever that is. Now I wouldn't mind some of the prosperity of the relatives I was brought up to believe were 'left behind' in Hungary under tyranny. I remember birthdays in childhood packing parcels for my cousins in Budapest. I only hope they remember to do the same for me now — a rare form of sausage was my parting request last week.

○

The Hungarians have sold their soul for a mess of gulyas soup, moan the correspondents who've been out there lately covering the Uprising. Which of course makes them different beings from the voters of South East England. Some Magyars have taken 30 or more pieces of silver as well.

One much featured element of Hungary's peculiar variant of Communism is the rise of the New Rich, the Forint (and I daresay dollar) millionaires who drive their spare Mercedes into town and flaunt their wealth as much as nouveaus do anywhere. They're the entrepreneurs, the foreign currency manipulators, the import-export middlemen who've thrived on a government system of encouraging private enterprise.

But the Old Rich survive, too, and have managed to maintain their status as the middle class.

My cousin lives in a three-storey villa 20 minutes from Budapest which, despite the upheavals, has remained in the family for almost 100 years. The house where I was born and lived until the age of three is just a couple of hundred yards away. Her home is looking its most delightful this time of year; all the colours of autumn are out in the acre and a half of garden and up in the wooded hills beyond.

When the mist clears there's a picture postcard view of the city below. Parked outside the garage are the household's two cars, a gleaming blue Saab (a turbo-charged variety is being delivered soon) and the household's town runabout, an economical Baby Fiat. It could be one of the leafier lanes of Highgate on the edge of Hampstead Heath, only I'm being greeted in effusive Hungarian.

○

I'm ushered into a splendid living room crammed full of Empire furniture and plied with the delicacies remembered from childhood. We exchange family gossip, a birth, a marriage, my brother-in-law's redundancy. Then it's a tour of the house, starting, appropriately enough, in the basement.

A useful space, this, which strikes me as saying much about contemporary Hungary. On 4 November 1956, when the Russian tanks rolled into Budapest to crush the infant revolution, my cousins used it as a cover from big bangs and shellfire. Now it's a cellar for storing the wine produced in the vineyards of their holiday home on the shores of Lake Balaton, Hungary's equivalent of the seaside.

I think of the cramped basement in Notting Hill I call my only home, of the 2CV I was forced to sell for scrap and settle down to talk to my cousins of the rigours of life behind the Iron Curtain. 'Communism seems to agree with you,' I begin, expecting a negative. 'Well, things have been tough, but they're a lot better now,' the English speaker of the clan, still bronzed from a recent trip to Turkey, replies. 'At the moment we're doing all right and we're not complaining, but the future looks different.' My cousins aren't party members or high-flying entrepreneurs, but chemical researchers, a draughtsman, an engineer at the Opera House. Like most Hungarians they've accepted the bribe offered by Janos Kadar and the post '56 leadership: put up with the leadership of the party and Russia, don't rock the boat and we'll give you liberal reforms, consumer goods unknown elsewhere in Eastern Europe and a degree of freedom.

○

In the case of my family the carrot has been the prospect, realised now, of buying back the house expropriated in the '50s and ensuring it can be passed on to the next generation. And, of course, the second home. But their story is hardly typical. The extremes of poverty and wealth would be striking anywhere in Western Europe, extraordinary under the goulash Communism which Hungary has.

There are plenty of poor — even the official figures put 800,000 on the bread line — and you don't have to go far to see them. The outskirts of Pest are full of slum tenements and conditions are even worse in the provinces. Gypsies are openly begging in restaurants — a sight I never saw on my last visit 18 months ago.

The reasonably well-off have to work immensely hard to attain the creature comforts they aspire to, putting strains on family life — Hungary has the second highest divorce rate in the world.

One casualty is Miklos who I found in a Budapest bar drowning his sorrows in the Hungarian fire-water, Palinka. Like most Hungarians who can, he has a second job. He's an electrician and works for the state company from seven to four, earning roughly the national average of £140 a month. But it costs about £300 a month for a family of four to live comfortably; so at the stroke of 4pm he leaves the job he's on, completed or not, and takes on private work until about 10, earning three times his state wages. Weekends are even more lucrative. 'But I never see my wife and she's taken up with an another man. While I work, she plays. I know she can't leave me, though. You can't find a flat anywhere in the city so there's nowhere she can go.'

○

In Hungary only the few dissidents talk politics as we, or even the Poles, might know it — using words like democracy and totalitarianism. To the rest, politics is almost entirely about money. They're keeping their side of the bargain made in the aftermath of '56. Those who break the deal are tolerated, up to a point.

Every now and then, police flex their muscles by seizing the presses of samizdat journals like *Beszelo* or *Hirmondo*. But on the whole, if dissent is confined to Budapest and magazine circulations are kept low, the opposition is allowed a free hand.

The anniversary of the Uprising wasn't such a time. The State was jittery. A TV series about 1956 was being shown — for the first time the people could actually see pictures of what happened — and the authorities reckon they made a mistake allowing it. So the iron fist was allowed out from the velvet glove.

Four days before the 23 October anniversary Laszlo Rusai, a 31-year-old teacher and activist, was incarcerated in a mental hospital for displaying a poster in his window declaring 'Remember 56 — Freedom for Hungary'. The next day Gabor Demszky, a leading samizdat publisher, his wife and two children, were threatened with forcible eviction from their state-owned flat. On the anniversary day itself Ferenc Koszeg, editor of the weighty and theoretical *Beszelo*, was stripped of his passport.

None of this, naturally, was known by my cousins. What disturbs me after my visit is that I don't think they would have been bothered if I had told them. They, like the rest of Hungary, are waiting delivery of the new Saab.

Victor Sebestyen

Victor Sebestyen is a reporter with the London Standard.

ROGER WODDIS

Throwback

'Let no one in this government ever again say with hand on heart and a straight face that the days of throwing huge sums of money indiscriminately at social problems are over.' — London Standard

Hooray for Nigel, naughty but nice!
Who dares to say we've turned our coats?
The Lady has melted, we're out of ice,
We've lowered the flag and burned our boats,
Steady and ready to pay the price —
Full steam ahead as we go for votes!

Billions and billions on schools and health,
Lawson the cad is the lad for me.
There is no end to the nation's wealth,
Bless his bonanza spending spree!
Where is the gain doing good by stealth?
Let us have more of his briberee!

But wait, but wait, I hear you cry,
Isn't it wrong to drain the cup?
'Not if it's Trident', they reply.
Throwing huge sums and all that gup,
Once they've got in, will again apply.

Let's throw a party and all throw up.

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'He was ever an unlikely national hero'

PATRICK FORBES *and*
JOLYON JENKINS *interview*

Norman Tebbit and find there is less to him than meets the eye

NORMAN TEBBIT struggled through the double doors of Conservative Central Office, his progress hampered by the three large ministerial boxes he was holding. No one helped him. No one, indeed, even seemed to notice that the Chairman of the Conservative Party and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had arrived for work — 15 minutes late. The cliché seemed to hold good: he was small and grey; a rather insignificant-looking figure.

We were received into his office. At his elbow, a large video recorder — for those sessions with Kate Adie, one assumes. On the desk, a Get Well card, signed by his secretaries. On a shelf — he pointed out, by way of smalltalk — three little bicycles. Few politicians can be as aware of their image, or make such constant reference to it, as Mr Tebbit.

We went to interview him with certain pre-conceived ideas; mainly that his attack on the BBC's activity was a case study in political mismanagement. Having decided to go after the BBC, Tebbit, together with his long-standing assistant Michael Dobbs, vice-chairman of Saatchis, had gone for a subject — Libya — which was no longer the issue of the moment, and a medium — news reports — about which the public could not care less. Once the report was in his hands, he seemed to have no clear idea of how to use it. His covering letter to the BBC carried the bizarre disclaimer: 'I expect that you too will make your own detailed analysis. However, that would miss the point I am making . . .'

We had spoken to a number of Tory MPs and activists, and it seemed undeniable that his standing within the party hierarchy had been damaged — though not with the grassroots, with which he maintains an umbilical link. Within days, senior colleagues were studiously *not* backing him. Douglas Hurd said last weekend: 'Broadcasters, like politicians . . . must be prepared for the slings and arrows. In the event it is not always clear who are the Christians and who are the lions.'

The interview did not greatly change our opinion (though it should be said Tebbit was perfectly amicable). He showed all the signs of trying to scramble out of a hole that he had no very clear idea of how he had got into. Why, we asked, had he chosen to attack the BBC specifically over Libya? 'Well, there were a number of possible subjects, some of them would have required a very, very large amount of work, for example the allegation that there was bias in the drama side. What we looked for was something self-contained, something where there were transcripts, where we were dealing with facts.' If 'self-contained', did Mr Tebbit think the Libyan broadcasts typical of BBC news reporting. Apparently not: 'No, no I wouldn't, and indeed that's part of the whole point I was seeking to make. On the whole, standards are high, but there are lamentable lapses, and you have to focus in on these . . .'

What then was he trying to do in 'focusing in' on the odd lapse or two? 'Well if you make the generalised statement that the BBC is biased against the Labour Party, which is so often being made, then this statement can be brushed off very easily . . . So you do have to be precise. And if the standard is generally good, as it is . . . though there is a tendency to muddle news with comment, and a tendency to sensationalise . . . er I have lost track of what your question was.'

'Stick to the facts'

This is no isolated failure of communication — confusion about the point of the exercise is general. Tebbit supporter Sir William Clark, MP for Croydon South, was no clearer: 'I say stick to the facts and avoid the conjecture. The governors should tell producers to do that.' How, by a directive? 'No, no that's not necessary'.

As invited, we repeated our question: what was Tebbit trying to achieve? 'Well we're trying to achieve a consciousness amongst staff in the BBC, and in this case in particular amongst the news editors . . . that they should think rather more carefully about the way in which they present news; to make sure that they go back day by day to the responsibilities that are laid on them by the BBC charter, to present news as news without editorialising.'

Did Mr Tebbit think that he had succeeded in his aim of preventing editorialising? 'Well yes, to a greater extent than one might expect from the surface froth.' For surface froth, read rebuttals from the Director General, and opinion polls that show 80 per cent of the British public to disagree with him. 'In my memory they've never accepted any criticism, they think themselves a rather superior breed of person, above we mere grubby politicians. And I think they have had to consider their position rather more carefully, though of course their public reaction has been "No, shan't, yah boo."' What was Tebbit's evidence for this surprising claim, did he *sense* it? 'Oh well there are people inside the BBC who do talk to us on a friendly and informal basis, and we *sense* from what they say that there has been a degree of *thinking* amongst professional journalists.'

What about Mr Hurd's remarks on Christians and lions? 'He could have been criticising the BBC! Anyway he was speaking as a minister. It is not the government which is having a row with the BBC, it is me with a different hat on.' Yes, but did Mr Hurd not wear the same hat? 'Oh well in the

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run up to an election.'

FROM A TORY perspective, the most damning criticism to be made of Tebbit's onslaught by the BBC is not that he should not attack the BBC, but that he chose the wrong facet to attack. To economic libertarian Peter Clark, candidate for Aberdeen East, and himself an ex-BBC employee, the real task is de-regulation. Which did Tebbit think was more important — de-regulation, or maintaining Reithian standards? Once again he had no clear position, de-regulation was 'desirable', but so was maintaining standards . . .

This fundamental lack of clarity about policy objectives has meant that Tebbit's legacy to the BBC may be the exact opposite of his original intentions; namely to shore up the tottering reign of his arch enemy, the Director General, for a couple of days. In the heat of battle the BBC rallied to him, but it remains the most compelling topic of cruel gossip among television folk that Milne's grasp has been slipping.

For example, two days after the launch of the Tebbit broadside, Milne was speaking to the Royal Television Society annual ball at the Grosvenor House — the right forum, and the right time to reassert the Corporation's independence, to tell Tebbit where to put his textual analysis. Instead, Milne concentrated on the problems of the inner cities, and assured his bewildered audience that the BBC was going to invest £50,000 in the inner cities. The applause, when he sat down, was perfunctory.

We suggested to Mr Tebbit, as others have, that his attitude towards the BBC verged on the McCarthyite. 'I would hope not. The characteristic of McCarthyism was that you denounce people for some "crime" which may or may not be a crime, and which then may or may not be committed. It may be the crime of thinking wrong. I see people are now being denounced for being heterosexuals! I think that the criticisms one makes should be made robustly, but that's it.'

THIS TOOK US on to permissiveness, the subject he first raised in his Disraeli lecture last November. A few days before we'd asked Mary Whitehouse how much her position had in common with Mr Tebbit's. Her organisation's methods — soliciting the views of outraged Middle England and presenting the BBC with a Report — are similar to those of Central Office. She *was* worried about politics: 'Right through the 23 years we have been working there has been concern about left-wing bias . . . the fact of the matter is that the permissive society with its free-for-all philosophy had very much a left-wing manifestation.'

Pushing the bandwagon

Now, we asked Mr Tebbit: how much was his attack on the BBC the same as Mrs Whitehouse's? 'I have a good deal of sympathy for the Mary Whitehouse line though I wouldn't go all the way along with it by any means. I suspect that this may mean that by the end of the century I may be regarded as a permissive.' He cited the result of the recent Cambridge Union debate ('this house believes pornography is a lesser evil than censorship') which Mrs Whitehouse defeated by more than two to one. 'On that issue the public is with me and is very concerned about pornography and violence.' If public opinion — as measured by this novel test — is moving in Mr Tebbit's direction, what does that leave him to do? 'Just because a bandwagon is rolling your way is no reason not to give it a shove.' How? 'Oh, probably

'The characteristic of McCarthyism was that you denounce people for some "crime" which may or may not be a crime, and which then may or may not be committed. It may be the crime of thinking wrong. I see people are now being denounced for being heterosexuals!'

the way I've been shoving so far, by suggesting that if one is of a liberal frame of mind, because you want to leave people free to go as they will is no reason to tear down all the maps and pull down the signposts.'

It seemed unspecific. When John Mortimer interviewed Mr Tebbit for the *Spectator*, he'd asked him whether he would imprison homosexuals. 'Not as such,' Mr Tebbit had replied, darkly. Now we invited him to elaborate. He had meant, he said, that he wouldn't imprison them unless they broke the law ('*as it is*'), and not necessarily even then. So, would he want to change the law? 'Not at present.' What did *that* mean? 'There are circumstances that one doesn't envisage: what I'm saying is that looking at things as they are, I do not see a case for changing the law.' Was he talking about Aids? No, he wasn't, though Aids might cause a backlash: 'I might find myself unpopular with a *different* group of people.' Could he say at all what circumstances might make him want the law changed? No.

Again, the sense of a man who had taken a position but had no clear programme or strategy. What did he want in the manifesto? Couldn't talk about that, that was for him and his colleagues to decide, though he did think it should not be self-congratulatory, should still be *radical*. Yes but what *radical* measures did he want? Well, there were things to be done in education, and . . . local government. We tried the personal note, was his nephew still unemployed? 'Which nephew?' Yes, one had been unemployed, and that had been a 'problem'. But it was a *problem* common to most extended families in Britain, and anyway *he'd got over it*, and settled down to a rather 'establishment' career.

Sadly, all that is left to Tebbit is his own anti-establishment image. In conversation he refers to it again and again, as though it were a dearly loved, recently deceased family pet. Did he not think that it was one of the functions of the media to be 'anti-establishment'? Well of course he had no objection to that, indeed he himself, etc. It is the temptation to live up to this image, without thinking through what he is saying, that gets him into mess after mess. It will ensure that he remains, in the words of Tory MP Robin Squire, 'ever an unlikely national hero', and no more. □

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The wisdom of the despised

The* Sunday Times, *in the person of its regular columnist Peter Jenkins, believes (9 November) that a 'great and good homosexual' ought to be on any 'serious' national emergency committee to confront Aids. In that case, argues* ANDREW LUMSDEN, *urgent common sense would add a 'great and good prostitute'

TONY NEWTON, minister of health, is at the despatch box in the Commons. He shows the House (612 male MPs, 23 female, and they're all there, heaped to the rafters) how to conceal a condom in the mouth and roll it — this in mime, in the natural absence of a volunteer — over the penis of a man who is paying for oral sex but refusing to wear a sheath, so that the man never suspects it has been done.

The radio audience laments that the Commons isn't televised, but Lady Trumpington, Health under-secretary of state in the Lords, repeats the exhibition for some 1200 peers, 450 of whom have never before set foot in Westminster, and before the TV cameras. Health workers applaud the two ministers without a shadow of a smile. The rest of the nation divides into po-faced outrage and dying with laughter.

Better to die of laughter, on the whole, than of Aids contracted through an open sore in the mouth. No, the scene hasn't been performed in our Parliament. But the trick for mouthing and palming a sheath onto an unwilling man, and removing it before he's in a state to be attentive, *was* shown by a woman prostitute at the European Parliament in Brussels during the second World Whores' Congress (1-4 October). She was dealing with the fact that prostitutes everywhere have to comply or pretend to with demands that they know are compounding their risk of contracting or transmitting the Aids virus. 'We have to speak out *now* about the high-risk groups among heterosexual men', says Michele Logan, a young British ex-prostitute whom we invited round to the *NS* for an Aids-talk last Friday. And she didn't mean needle-users or bisexuals.

Michele works with the International Committee for Prostitutes' Rights (ICPR) which organised the two Whores' Congresses, and was at both of them. Condoms and the widespread reluctance of many individual 'punters' (prostitutes' customers) and groups of 'punters' to wear them when paying for penetrative sex, were urgently on the minds of this year's several hundred delegates, including guest venereologists, from 17 countries. Continental 'eros centres' (eg Hamburg) 'are run by men who pay taxes to government: prostitutes are *discouraged* from insisting that men wear condoms'. In several Swiss cantons medical checks on prostitutes are compulsory: 'that deludes men into believing they don't *need* to wear sheaths'.

Kobal Collection

Melina Mercouri in *Never on a Sunday*, a male director's dream of the 'golden-hearted tart' working the US navy on the Athens waterfront. It had better be a sober moment now when the fleet comes in

And Britain? Michele pounces on 'police who harass prostitute women the moment they find condoms on them. It's the same with hotel security. They'll check on a woman because they suspect she's a prostitute, because of her red shoes or whatever, you know, forcibly search her bag which is illegal, and if they find condoms, call the police. This has really got to change: let's get the facts about what goes on out from under the carpet'.

'There are entire cultural groups of men, Muslims, Rastas', she goes on, 'who from religious or whatever motives insist that if they're paying they don't and won't use a sheath whatever the act. Far Eastern men', she says, 'tend to carry condoms with them' — she speculates that modern population-control programmes and former epidemics of venereal disease under military occupations are the reason — 'so what is it with these Western boys? Western governments cheerfully shove contraception on the Third World. Why not on the men at home? In Jamaica they try to make sheath-wearing virile: *If you want to be a man, strong and safe, use Panther condoms*. You see the ads everywhere. You can, you have to, shift behaviour.'

'ASK A PROSTITUTE her profession, and time and again what it really is is *addict*. A habit to finance, general poverty, a pimp — which is comparatively rare in Britain — time and again will force an individual prostitute or those in a business quarter of prostitution to take the cash and risk an "unprotected" man even when she knows much more about sexual health than the punter.' Michele hands me the list of resolutions passed by the international gathering of 'whores' in Brussels on 4 October. They include:

- Addicted prostitutes [male as well as female] who use needles must have access to legal inexpensive needles in order to prevent the spread of disease, specifically hepatitis and Aids' [some 50 per cent of intravenous drug-users in Edinburgh are estimated to be HIV (Aids virus)-positive and many are of necessity on the game];
- Codes for mandatory use of condoms by clients should be enacted [as by-laws at local authority level, presumably, were it to be done in Britain] to be enforced by worker organisations not by state authorities [that is, through prostitutes being able to turn to their own organisations or 'non-judgemental' health workers];
- Prostitutes and ex-prostitutes to be employed in training health workers about the realities of prostitution health issues.

In America, 7 per cent of the 26,878 Aids cases registered between 1981 and end-October 1986 have been women; 700 have died; 15 per cent of the women with Aids are understood to have contracted it from heterosexual contact, and 71 per cent of those specifically from heterosexual contact with an intravenous drug user. Infection through prostitution is an unquantifiable but certain contributory factor. Beyond the diagnosed Aids cases lies a vaster pool of women who must, if the findings of restricted surveys are to be trusted, now be HIV-positive. Again, a disproportionate number can be expected to be in prostitution and quite unable to leave it.

Michele tells me that in one or more localities in California the experiment has been tried of wiring the premises of identified HIV-positive prostitutes so that if they leave the building an alarm sounds in the police station. Or was it just a proposal? Federal health officials in Washington, addressing themselves to prostitute *and* client, though in oddly disparate form, have just urged that no man who has been with a prostitute in the last six months donate blood; and no man or women who has been an active prostitute at any time *since 1977* do so either.

The Philippines has just formally asked the USA to send 'only Aids-free troops' since 'bar-girls' near US bases were found to be HIV-positive (America is screening the military now). In Sydney, the Australian Prostitutes Collective is now state-funded so that it can and does distribute free condoms and safer-sex advice to the male 'punters' in the Kings Cross red-light district. The latter tactic, in which government or its agencies overtly recognises, fosters and funds mutual self-help among prostitutes so that they are as well-armed as possible to turn away the money and insistence of the wilfully 'unprotected' man is unquestionably what a 'great and good prostitute' would press on this week's Cabinet committee on Aids — or on the public if given a seat on a successor body.

In Britain, nine women and seven men are so far known by the DHSS to have contracted Aids after heterosexual contact. The Micheles of the world need to be heard from, loudly. □

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My own Enlightenment

When* MATTHEW HOFFMAN — *an American Democrat — took on a year-long job as a researcher for Channel 4's celebration of libertarian economics,* The New Enlightenment, *his friends wondered if working on the programme would change his views. It did

MY EMPLOYERS had hired me in the knowledge that the only political organisation I had ever joined was Democrats Abroad, and that my allegiances were to the liberal wing of that party. They gave me the job because I was the only applicant who had a background in both journalism and academic philosophy.

I knew that a year's exposure to conservative and libertarian thought (or 'classical liberalism', as the programme calls the amalgam of positions that it seeks to articulate) would be bound to affect my own political thinking; and I wondered just what the effect would be. So did my employers.

The first signs I had that a change was brewing occured in conversations with friends: I would be seeking to explain what the series was about, and suddenly I would notice that I was *arguing* the case for various conservative views, rather than simply expounding them. At first, I thought this was just a matter of rhetoric, but gradually I realised that I was coming to accept some of the arguments I was putting forward.

Looking back, I can see that I began the year with five buttresses to protect me from the looming swell of right-wing thought. These were my beliefs in central planning, affirmative action, the welfare state, the contemptibility of capitalists, and, finally, the ideal of equality itself. Each of these towering cliffs was washed away by turn. The authors responsible for sapping their foundations were, respectively, Friedrich Hayek, Thomas Sowell, Charles Murray, George Gilder, and Robert Nozick. To get some idea of the kinds of argument I encountered, consider the following *aperçu* of Hayek's.

In order to plan an economy it would be necessary for the central planning authority to have before it the knowledge that is now dispersed over millions of buyers and sellers: information about the relative value to these people of the various goods and services on offer. This information is now contained in the prices at which goods are exchanged, but those prices would not exist without the very market processes that central planning is meant to replace. *Ergo*, planning would have to proceed with insufficient information and consequent inefficiencies and rigidities. This explains why, all over the world, socialist countries are flirting with 'market solutions'.

Or, consider the conundrum posed by James Buchanan, winner of this year's Nobel prize in economics. The point of introducing government into economic life on a large scale in this century has been to overcome 'market failure' caused by the self-interested actions of competing capitalists. But this solution is based on the unexamined premise that politicians and civil servants are not also primarily self-interested. Take this common sense observation into account, add to it the monopoly power of government, and you have a situation where the remedy is worse than the disease.

As I became aware of my changing opinions, I found myself having to decide whether or not to speak my mind to those of my friends who were still marching to a set of assumptions I had now abandoned. I decided to speak out when I was in disagreement with them, although I feared this might cost me dear. In fact, none of my friends did anything other than argue with me; although some of *their* friends would treat me with contempt, to the point of storming away from the dinner table after accusing me of complacency or worse.

MIDWAY through the year, I recognised that I had been holding a set of incompatible beliefs since my school days 25 years ago in Pennsylvania. I had accepted then, with Henry David Thoreau, that 'that government is best which governs least'. However, I had also learned as a boy that Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal was the best thing that had ever happened to America.

The essence of the New Deal was that the national government had taken responsibility for the victims of the Great Depression: it had organised work programmes, given subsidies to failing farmers, brought industry and finance under close regulation, and introduced such welfare state benefits as unemployment insurance and social security (pensions). My family were formerly poor, immigrant Americans, and I had been told as a child that my Polish-born, Jewish grandparents cried as Franklin Roosevelt's funeral train passed through Brooklyn in 1945. Now I was being told that the New Deal had in fact brought injustice and inefficiency in its wake.

In order to benefit the farmers, the elderly, the unemployed, and the impoverished, Roosevelt had established a giant bureaucratic machine, whose legacy of regulation, subsidy, and deficit-spending now threatened the prosperity of future generations. It encouraged a debilitating habit of dependency, and it made commonplace the restriction of previously inviolate property rights.

One of the things I discovered when I started my reading for *The New Enlightenment* is that there is a century-old debate about reconciling the ideals of freedom and equality. Thoreau's apothegm, I now see, was his contribution to a perennial antithesis. The conflict during the miners' strike, between the collective imperative of solidarity and the individual right to go to work, is but one recent instance. The dilemma arises every time you are compelled to pay taxes to support your indigent neighbour, rather than left to give that aid freely.

Becoming aware of a contradiction, however, is not resolving it. When I received my absentee ballot from Pennsylvania for the recent US elections, it took me two weeks to make up my mind how to vote. I was torn. My heart said that the Democrats are on the side of those in need, but my head said that the Republicans understand better that economic freedom underpins other freedoms. In the end, I confess, I followed my heart; but only, I think, because there is a conservative wing of the Democratic party for me to shelter under. That is the measure of the change in me. □

The New Enlightenment *continues on Channel 4, Wednesdays at 8.30pm, until 17 December.*

Apologies all round

We apologise to all *New Statesman* subscribers whose copies of the issue for 31 October arrived late — or not at all.

We have made the strongest representations to the Post Office about the mysterious 'disappearance' in the postal system of so many copies of a single issue of the magazine and await their explanation.

Meanwhile, any subscribers who have *still* not received that issue and wish to have a copy should write to our subscriptions department.

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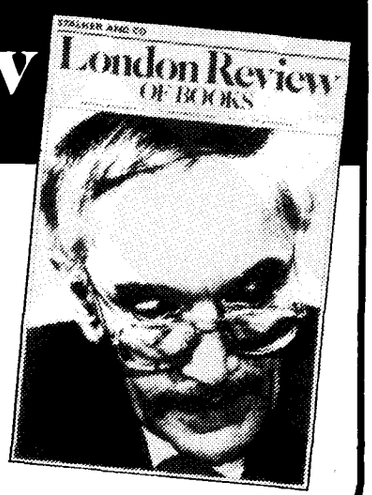

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Sight of promised land

On the eve of CND's annual conference* BRUCE KENT *argues that Reykjavik marked a turning point. A nuclear weapons free world has been glimpsed — albeit briefly

IN JUNE of this year General Bernard Rogers made, during a speech in London, a remarkable admission. 'We have failed' he said, 'to convince the majority of our publics of the major menace to their freedom and to elicit from them a willingness for greater sacrifice, but we must keep on trying.' This major menace was, he declared 'Soviet intimidation' but not 'overt aggression by the Warsaw Pact.'

I don't think that keeping on trying is going to do General Rogers much good. He has had, since nuclear weapons became again a major item of public concern, seven years and unlimited public relations resources at his disposal and yet more and more people refuse to locate the major menace where he finds it. They persist in believing that the major menace is the arms race itself. The accident at Chernobyl has convinced thousands that the nuclear world is a very precarious one, though it is unclear why the innumerable previous nuclear weapon accidents or even the post-Chernobyl sinking of a nuclear armed submarine did not have the same effect. Perhaps there was something especially eerie about a radioactive cloud drifting across Western Europe, indifferent to treaties and natural boundaries.

In this country, far from being dead and buried as the right predicted after the 1983 election, CND and the wide range of other independent groups which make up what is now called 'the peace movement' are alive and well. If not at the peak position of membership which it was in 1981 and 1982, CND still has a regular average of 250 new national members every week and a healthy renewal rate.

But the membership of peace organisations is not the only indicator. It is now very difficult to get a Conservative MP up on a platform to defend government 'defence' policies. The SDP/Liberal Alliance has run firmly aground, if one can run firmly on to a fudge. Dr Owen's Anglo-French fantasy has come apart at the seams and Liberal grass roots made it clear at Eastbourne that they were not prepared to sacrifice principle and tradition.

Subsequently, the Parliamentary Liberal Party has been dragooned into support for 'our minimum nuclear deterrent' pending negotiations, without doing anything to explain how and whom it is designed to deter from doing what. Still less is it explained why *we* are entitled to a minimum nuclear deterrent but apparently no-one else is to be allowed to join the existing club. In short, disarmament issues are once again centre stage.

THERE CAN be no doubt that what happened and what did not happen in Iceland has done something to make easier the path of the disarmers. For one thing, rather like mist lifting as you stand on a mountain, we were actually allowed a sight of the promised land: a world, nuclear weapon free. That did much for the adrenalin. For far too long we have watched the pundits counting this against that, all in the name of sacred (and senseless) nuclear balance. In Iceland the two superpower chiefs actually, at one stage, had genuine disarmament on the table. Of course the mist came down again fairly rapidly, but a possibility once seen will not easily be forgotten.

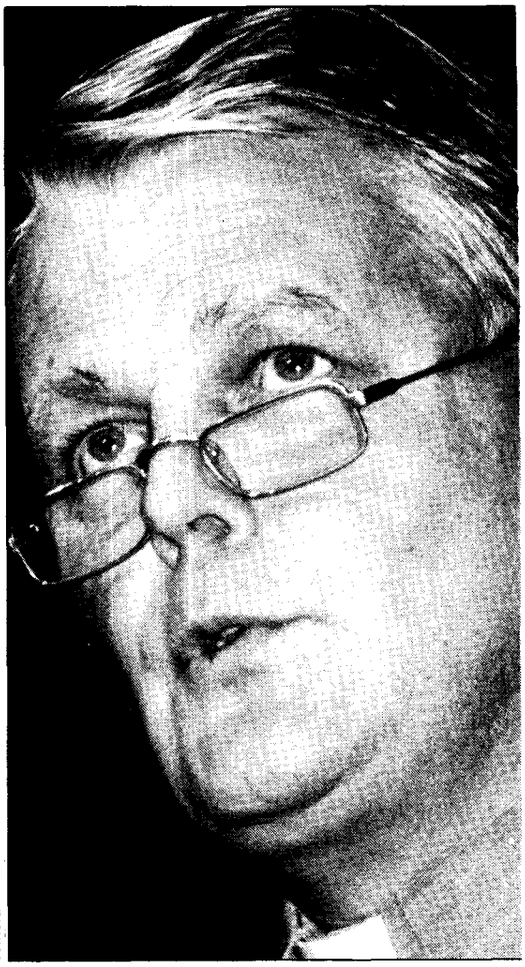
From the debris of Reykjavik have come a number of good things. The famous Zero option which was supposed to be the point of all that dual track ding dong suddenly came apart. Zero option was overnight revealed by NATO leaders as a rather dodgy business. A little exposure of such top level insincerity is no bad thing.

However there is a clear point of principle that ought to be made now and not left to Mrs Thatcher. Mr Gorbachev has some good reasons for refusing to consider cuts in strategic nuclear systems while Star Wars remains a threat. He has no similar serious reason for insisting that 'European' missiles be also tied to Star Wars. That much of the Reykjavik vision is realisable now and we ought to insist on it. Whether the Soviet military will wear such a suggestion is another matter: they can point to the massive Western indifference to the quite extraordinary and much under-praised Soviet 15-month unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing.

HOW THEN SHOULD Labour, and any other party with a sensible defence and disarmament programme, face an oncoming election? To start with, with a little more confidence. The record of the present government is these matters is lamentable, their voting pattern at the United Nations deplorable, their double standards despicable. They have opposed a nuclear freeze, a test ban and a no first use commitment. One who was and *de facto* still is a principal spokesman, Lord Carrington, said recently that the Atlantic Alliance relies on nuclear weapons 'to provide credible retaliatory capabilities if deterrence fails and we are attacked'. He obviously believes that a limited nuclear war is possible. Certainly, US Assistant Secretary of Defence Richard Perle does. Only recently on Radio 4 he explained that, if necessary, America would use all weapons including nuclear in order 'to prevail'.

This is certifiable nonsense and all the opposition parties ought to be saying so. They should also be saying in the simplest, clearest terms that American bases in this country back up illusions of nuclear war fighting and that British independent nuclear weapons, whatever the brand name, are neither independent nor credible.

Above all, opposition parties should be offering a wider vision. It is not enough to go on about NATO as it it were here for all time. It has become a contemporary golden calf. Surely someone needs to point in the clearest way towards a bloc free world and a redirection of the vast resources now used for war to the real needs of the human community. The Swiss concept of General Defence has as a first point a 'foreign policy aimed at reducing tensions and the prevention of war . . .' It is high time we all raised our eyes from the level of weapons and thought in world terms more about justice and reconciliation, as well as defensive defence.



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Reykjavik was 'rather like mist lifting as you stand on a mountain. Of course the mist came down again fairly rapidly, but a possibility once seen will not easily be forgotten.'

The annual CND conference is taking place this weekend (14-16 November). Conference traditionally has a remarkable power of kicking own goals in media terms. One can only touch wood and cross fingers once again; this year's potential own goals are not immediately apparent. But the conference also has a remarkable tradition of solidarity and friendship. This year over 1,500 participants, all for peace but often with very different priorities and perceptions, come together not just to discuss policy but to share experiences.

But I wonder if anything will come from conference which will be more blunt and to the point than the message the representatives of the Scottish churches delivered to Her Majesty, to whom they appear to have special access, on 29 October.

> Madam, your government's aid programme is a disgusting charade, an insult to the poor. Its [defence policy's] reliance on Trident is totally anti-Christian. Its refusal to listen to any dissenting voice the destruction of our democracy. We ask you once more, what are we to do?

The answer is to get rid of that government and to do so will require rather more active, intelligent and visionary campaigning on the 'defence' issue than is evident just now. □

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ECONOMICS

Nigel finds another way to give us what we've already got

Jan Toporowski

THE LONGEST post-war public spending crisis has been with us for over ten years. Pre-empting proper political debate, this crisis has in large measure been a self-inflicted wound on the body politic of this country. Obsessed by alleged debaucheries in the public sector, the politicians that led us through the crisis have achieved little more than cheese-parings, considerable waste and the neglect of some real political issues.

There is therefore every reason to welcome the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement to the House of Commons last Thursday, announcing that the crisis had been resolved, with the outcome a victory for the government. In principle it can now get back to solving the real problems of political economy, such as unemployment, education and local council finance; public expenditure can be now properly planned instead of assuming notional 'savings' in it and setting targets for reduction at later stages in the planning process, or in later crisis manoeuvres.

In brief the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that public spending in the next two fiscal years (1987-1989) would be a total of £10.2 billion higher than previously planned. This additional expenditure is going to be concentrated on education, spending on which is to increase by £5 billion, social security, which is to get £3.4 billion more, health, which will get £1.3 billion more, and housing, which will benefit to the tune of £451 million.

For the diehard supporters of cuts in income taxes, no specific promises were made. But the Medium Term Financial Strategy, which seems only to be displayed nowadays solely for this purpose, was stated to have spare 'fiscal adjustments' of £2 billion in 1987/88, £4 billion in 1988/89, and £3 billion in 1989-90: just about enough to allow the basic rate of income tax to be reduced from 29 pence in the pound to 26 pence, or even 25 pence if things go well.

Opposition claims of a pre-electoral spending spree are, however, exaggerated, although the government would probably quite like people to think that the wicked stepmother has become a fairy godmother. The headline increases given above amount to an increase of a mere 3.4 per cent in the levels of total expenditure previously planned. Set against current actual levels of spending, these increases largely reflect a greater realism in setting planned expenditure targets. Hence the reduction in the reserve for overspending and unforeseen contingencies from £14 billion over the two years in question to £9 billion.

> ***Opposition claims of a pre-electoral spending spree are exaggerated. These increases largely reflect greater realism in setting planned spending targets***

BUT HOW REALISTIC is this greater realism? Ultimately it is the performance of the economy in the next couple of years that will determine what level of expenditure on, say, unemployment benefits will be required by the level of economic activity, and how much tax revenue it will deliver, given certain rates of taxation. To answer this question we have to look at the economic forecasts that accompany the public expenditure plan. Here we see that the Autumn Statement bears the hallmarks of its inception in a short-lived bout of what we now know to have been premature post-OPEC euphoria last April. Readers will recall that, at that time, as the OPEC cartel lost control over world oil market supplies, oil prices started to fall quite precipitately so that, within weeks, they had more than halved and were heading for $10 per barrel. The post-OPEC euphoria was largely restricted to economic forecasters and government politicians who deal in success and optimism — motorists in fact had very little to reason to share in that euphoria. Lower oil prices were going to increase real incomes (i.e., the amount of crude oil that could be bought with a given amount of money) among everyone other than oil producers. We would all then be better off, spend more, produce more and trade more as a result of lower oil prices.

Since then all respectable economic forecasters, led by the most respectable of them all in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris, have scaled down their forecasts. The growth of world production, expenditure and trade has failed to accelerate, and in fact has started to slow down. This is simply because few of us spend all or even a significant proportion of our incomes on crude oil. At the same time, because any price is in effect the sum of the incomes of all those contributing to the delivery of a commodity (a principle that is the basis of modern macro-economics), falling oil prices mean falling revenues for countries that were our most dynamic export markets in the 1970s and the early 1980s. Moreover, falling prices and revenues make a highly indebted world economy even more fragile. This is because of the increasing possibility of default on debt payments which, with lower commodity prices, take up a higher proportion of debtor countries' export revenues.

In this Autumn Statement, Nigel Lawson gave the basis of his optimism as a continuation to the end of the decade of the present consumer boom, and an increase in exports of about 4½ per cent in 1987, after an increase in 1986 of probably around 2 per cent. The export boom is ostensibly because of buoyant consumer spending in other advanced industrialised countries, and the greater competitiveness of British exports after recent falls in sterling's exchange rates.

THE ASSUMED level of consumer expenditure must make anyone question how serious Nigel Lawson is about getting real wages down. Since this is the only mechanism for reducing unemployment that is recogised and approved by the government, these assumptions clearly cast doubt on its declared commitment to reduce unemployment, or they are at least a sorry admission by the government of what it regards as its chances of success in this respect. The Chancellor does forecast that unemployment will fall. But he has been confidently predicting this for three out of the past four years and it has not happened. So it is perhaps naive to take him at his word on this now. In any case we all know that he means the official figures for unemployment, which bear less and less relation to the true scale of the problem.

So it is the forecast export boom that is perhaps most doubtful. Even if it does come about, on the assumption that crude oil prices can be held at $15 per barrel, the current account balance of payments will move from a surplus in 1985 of £3½ billion to a deficit of £1½ billion in 1987. Observers of Britain's deindustrialisation will note the forecast *deficit* on manufacturing trade rising from £3 billion in 1985 to £7½ billion in 1987.

> ***The post-oil-price-cut euphoria was largely restricted to economic forecasters and government politicians who deal in success and optimism — motorists had very little reason to share in it***

Somewhat heroically, the balance of trade in invisibles (tourism, banking, insurance and so on) is scheduled to rise from a *surplus* of £5½ billion in 1985 to £9 billion in 1987 (the Chancellor is clearly hoping for a Big Bang here!).

It is in these foreign trade projections that the Treasury's optimism is most likely to be put to the test. With our poor investment record and interest rates seemingly stuck at record levels, it takes a considerable act of faith to believe that consumers in Europe and North America will start to prefer buying British rather than Japanese, Korean or West German. A poor export performance will make the balance of payments deficit rise faster than planned. It would be wise to brace ourselves for more sterling slides next year, and the return of the public expenditure crisis. Meanwhile, we should trust in our own perception and experience of public spending on education, health, social security and housing, rather than in phoney increases in planned expenditure. □

Jan Toporowski is a City economist who specialises in economic planning and financial institutions.

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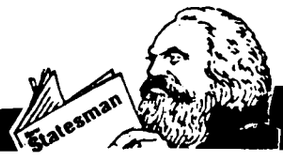

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MEDIA

Broadcasting retreats from the high public ground

Norman Willis

ARE OUR broadcasters running scared? Has Norman Tebbit's campaign to cow the BBC succeeding in cowing *all* television executives?

Independence of the BBC and the ITV companies *is* cherished by the labour movement. We have supported it even if it appeared that independence meant freedom to distort or ignore *our* positions — and it still seems so, sometimes. I have often defended press freedom, and I have applauded journalists who have shown their commitment to it where it counted and where such commitment could hurt or even kill. I would far rather have a situation where journalists have independence that can be (and is) misused than acquiesce in any campaign of abuse of an independence that I always felt to be part of my personal civil rights.

But a commitment to press and media freedom has meant, for me, a parallel commitment to media responsibility. That includes representing society in the round: and *that* must cover working men and women, 9.5 million of whom are organised in unions. That bloc, the largest voluntary association in the country, the source of much of the country's real wealth, is a voice which must be heard.

But. In a move so far little noticed or commented on, Channel 4 has signalled the demise, next March, of *Union World* — the only programme on the whole of television and radio to deal consistently and in depth with the concerns and achievements of the British trade union movement. It is to be replaced, they say, worryingly, by a broader, expanded treatment of the entire range of 'workplace issues' including, as only one aspect, the role of the unions.

We shall have to wait and see. Union World *was not perfect, and doubtless its format can be improved upon. What concerns me, however, is that its disappearance seems part of a pattern of retreat throughout the airwaves from the high ground of public service broadcasting.*

Certainly Channel 4, which began by promising to refresh minority and other interests that other channels could not reach, is proving a disappointment to trade unionists. Its 'alternative' live coverage of the TUC and party conferences was scrapped this year in favour of nightly highlights, compiled in the case of Congress by the *Union World* team (who will produce even this much, next year?). Low viewing figures were cited in support of this decision, although the likely level of daytime viewing was known before live coverage was introduced. In any event if viewing figures are to be regarded as the main criterion for Channel 4's scheduling, not too many of its programmes, apart from *Brookside* and American Football, can *really* rest easy.

The real reason for doing away with live coverage of the autumn conferences is that ITV-1 wants to off-load its unprofitable daytime schools programmes onto the minority channel, to make way for revenue-earning game shows and soap opera repeats on ITV throughout the day. On top of that Channel 4 was clearly losing the conference ratings battle with the BBC, and preferred to concentrate on 'complementing' the BBC's coverage rather than trying to improve on it.

THE ASSUMPTION is that the BBC is doing a perfectly good job in providing live coverage of the party conferences and that there is neither demand nor need for alternative coverage. I would question whether that is true.

As to coverage of trade union affairs, I would go much further. The BBC is *not* noted for providing the sort of coverage of trade unionism which *Union World*, in its limited way, has provided for the last few years.

1986, in case you didn't know, is designated 'Industry Year', and the Corporation, to celebrate that fact, produced a glossy brochure 'The BBC and Industry' outlining the range of BBC TV and radio programmes about industry planned for 'Industry Year'.

The 'enterprise culture' is well reported. A steady stream of programming, from *Financial World Tonight* to *The Money Programme*, down to the business slot on the *Today* programme, regularly chart the interests and concerns of the people who *own* and *run* industry. The people who *work* in industry, and their unions, only seem to rate coverage, however, when a juicy row or a difficult dispute projects them into the news and current affairs output. I do *not* demand special treatment for trade unions on television and radio. I *do* ask for fair treatment for a community of interest to which 9½ million men and women belong and millions more are affected by. *In an age of more and more ballots isn't the regular provision of unbiased background information essential to provide the basis on which to make an informed — and therefore genuinely free - choice?*

Contrast the time allocated by the BBC to two other groups in society. The BBC devotes 1.4 per cent of its air time to religious broadcasting — 'worship services' linked into theology or documentary programmes such as *Heart of the Matter* —a total of 415 hours on radio and 287 on television in 1985. The Corporation's current Annual Report justifies this output by saying that religion 'is still an occasional pre-occupation of the majority of the population if only because the landmarks of personal and national life still have religious overtones'. I wouldn't want to quarrel with that — but feel entitled to point out that active communicants at the peak religious festivals have been estimated at just 1.7 million.

On the other hand, agriculture and farming can certainly *not* be considered to be of occasional interest to the majority, or even a substantial minority, of the British people. In one typical week's *Radio Times*, there was scheduled 23 minutes of *Farming* on BBC1 TV; and on Radio 4, 15 minutes of *Farming Week*, 80 minutes of *Farming Today*, 55 minutes of *On Your Farm* and 3½ hours of *The Archers* including repeats. This is in addition to regional farming programmes.

What is the editorial judgement within the BBC that sets aside more than six hours per week specifically to the interests of farming — programmes sometimes made, it has been alleged in the past, with the active co-operation of the employers' federation, the 200,000-strong NFU — and no time at all during the whole of Industry Year, except for their live coverage of Congress, to address the interests of the trade unionists in British industry?

The Director-General of the BBC argues that the trade union perspective in industry is significantly reflected in the Corporation's industrial news and current affairs broadcasting. But consider this quote contained in an internal BBC Report — entitled, like the Industry Year booklet, 'The BBC and Industry' — prepared for the BBC's General Advisory Council in July 1984:

> There is no regular programme on either television or radio devoted to the interests and problems of workers in industry. Despite the coverage of work-related subjects in programmes like *In Business* there would still seem to be room for a programme which would regularly investigate the working environment of industry, the activities and philosophies of trade unionists and their trade unions — and those of non-unionised labour. The constantly changing and evolving process of industrial relations in Britain and the rest of the world, is not reflected on a regular basis in any single BBC programme, although the results of industrial relations breaking down are reported frequently.

What has Alasdair Milne done about this damning indictment of the BBC's industry coverage in the two and a half years since that report was presented? Absolutely nothing. Perhaps Mr Tebbit's intimidatory monitoring schemes and the approach of a general election will make it less likely that the BBC will take its courage in both hands and do even a little to redress the shocking imbalance in its supposedly impartial coverage of business and industry.

THIS IS WHY Channel 4's decision to axe *Union World* is disappointing. It is not good enough for the broadcasters to trade in their responsibility to give informal, consistent and — yes — critical coverage of a 9½ million-strong community of interest. They won't even get a quiet life in return from the broadcasting-bashers in Conservative Central Office.

Jeremy Isaacs was right in 1981 when he wrote, before the new channel took to the air:

> Channel 4 is very well aware of the need to give trade unions and trade union affairs more thorough and better informed coverage than they get now in order to ensure that the attitudes and opinions of trade unionists are fairly represented in the spectrum of British political opinion. We see the importance of doing that and, across the range of our programming, will strive to do it properly.

Circumstances certainly haven't changed in the last five years, Jeremy. Have you?

I don't want to knock religious or farming programmes; I am a loyal listener to *Bells on Sunday* and once rang up the BBC to complain about a slighting reference on a farming programme to the Women's Institute.

Nor do I complain about informed criticism of the trade union movement. But in a period when trade unions are increasingly looking outwards, broadcasting is looking the other way. Silence has always been the enemy of freedom — and the fading voice of the media on trade union matters should concern us all. □

Norman Willis is general secretary of the TUC.

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A bit of Yi Yi Zhi Yi

As the US Fleet calls in peacefully on a China port for the first time since 1949,* JONATHAN MIRSKY *puts Deng's policy in its 2,000-year-old context: he's using 'the barbarians to manage the barbarians'

A SHIFT has occurred in the Moscow-Peking-Washington triangle. China enjoys better relations with the Russians and with the Americans than they do with each other. Symbolic of China's pivotal role, in which it extracts the maximum concessions available from each of the superpowers, was the simultaneous presence in Peking in early October of Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister E A Rogachev and US Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger — just as Gorbachev and Reagan were falling out in Reykjavik.

But the nature and quality of each minister's reception in Peking showed what the Chinese mean when they explain 'we are independent of both superpowers but not equidistant between them.' Or, as Huan Xiang, a high-ranking foreign affairs specialist on the State Council, puts it: 'China's policies towards the USA and the Soviet Union are made separately, according to the conditions of bilateral relations, rather than on the basis of any triangular considerations.'

Nonetheless, it is instructive to note what actually happened between the Chinese and their Russian and American guests. Rogachev was in Moscow to continue the bilateral talks on 'normalisation' which began in 1982. This meeting, ninth in the series, was the first since late July, when Mikhail Gorbachev, speaking in Vladivostok and Khabarovsk, offered to improve Sino-Soviet relations, an offer which Deng Xiaoping has conceded contains 'something new', although he said, too, that unless the Russians press Hanoi to withdraw its forces from Kampuchea, nothing will have changed between Peking and Moscow. If there were such a 'solid step', the 82-year-old Deng observed to CBS television in early September, he would break his self-imposed rule to avoid foreign journeys and 'go to any place in the Soviet Union to meet with Gorbachev.'

Nothing so dramatic came of the Rogachev mission, and Deng has yet to give an audience to any of the important Soviet visitors to Peking. But the two sides issued a communiqué stressing their sincere desire for better relations, and agreed that starting next February negotiations would begin on border problems. Military dispositions and territorial claims along the 5,000 mile frontier, where 600,000 Russian and one million Chinese troops face each other, comprise one of Peking's 'Three Obstacles' to better relations, together with Kampuchea and the occupation of Afghanistan.

During his visit, Rogachev visited one of China's Special Economic Zones, the areas near Canton and Hong Kong offering attractive conditions to foreign investors, which to conservative Russians signify the depths of Deng Xiaoping's revisionism. (Twenty years ago China was denouncing Moscow for rushing down 'the capitalist road.')

Weinberger's visit, by contrast, was far more substantial and impressive. China and the US have already entertained each other's heads of state, senior ministers, and service chiefs, and share electronic intelligence; the annual increase in Sino-US trade alone exceeds the total between China and the Soviet Union. The Defence Secretary inspected an army base, flew to one of China's top-secret missile launching stations, and was received by Deng Xiaoping, always a Chinese sign of favour, although Taiwan remained the one obstacle to perfection. And even on Taiwan, Deng's demands did not unsettle the White House. The Americans, he told CBS, should 'encourage' Taiwan to establish postal, trade and travel links with the mainland, and they must reduce their arms sales to the Nationalists.

SOME CHINA-WATCHERS believe that China rolls out its 'obstacles' whenever it wants to score three points against Moscow or one against Washington, and soft-pedals them when things are going well.

There is something in this, but only a little. Like all countries China has genuine interests. Regaining Taiwan is one of them. It is always at the top of Deng's national priorities, even though the reunion may not come about for decades after 1997, while the islanders watch how China lives up to its promises to leave Hong Kong essentially undisturbed. The offers to Taiwan are even more generous. Similarly real is the Kampuchea issue. Vietnam's challenge to Chinese authority in Southeast Asia is centuries-long, interrupted only briefly during the war with France and the US.

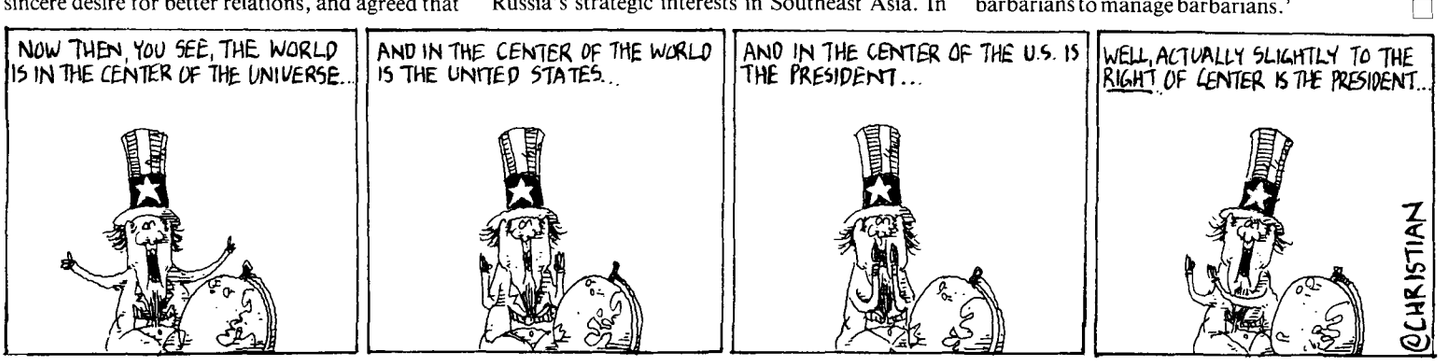
Afghanistan, on the other hand, is less important. It suits China for the Russians to be bogged down there. China has even conceded Russia's strategic interests in Southeast Asia. In Peking's eyes (and this annoys the Americans) a Russian foothold at Camranh Bay or Danang, the old US bases in southern Vietnam, is no longer unthinkable.

There remain hard-liners in Peking. They have scarcely changed their minds about the Russians — or the Americans — since the late sixties, when Soviet and Chinese troops killed each other in brutal border clashes and the Americans were bombing north Vietnam not far from China's Guangxi province. I encountered several such die-hards recently in China at one of the increasingly common meetings where Chinese and foreigners eat and sleep in the same hotel, and genuinely converse, rather than sticking to official lines.

In the elegant Fragrant Hills Hotel, where foreigners pay a Chinese worker's wages for several months for a single night, several of the Chinese participants (staying there free) foresaw the protracted US-Soviet conflict cooling temporarily while the Russians cut back military expenditures and rejuvenate their economy. The Americans, defeated in Vietnam, these analysts observe, are losing their dominant position in the Pacific in the face of a Russian push southwards. In the early 21st century, the Russian, tougher than ever, will goad their proxies once again into regional wars. In the meantime the Western peace movements, especially in Britain and West Germany, are doing Moscow's work by chivvying the Americans out of Europe and weakening NATO. Chuckling, the Russians will simply turn their SS-20s around and retarget them on the Far East. Despite this pessimistic long view, a few miles away in the party's headquarters next to the Forbidden City, the leaders can have their ideological cake and eat it, too.

Independent of the two superpowers, yes: together or sequentially the Chinese can entertain Rogachev and Weinberger, a Russian vice-premier and Ronald Reagan, Daniel Ortega of the Sandinistas and the American Chief of Staff. But equidistant, no. In June, near the northeastern frontier town of Manzhouli, according to Chinese reports designed to demonstrate how the Sino-Soviet relationship has improved since the 1969 border war, when 12 Chinese horses strayed into the USSR, Soviet guards rounded them up and returned them. In July, when 100 Russian horses crossed the other way, the Chinese reciprocated. Definitely better than a border shoot-out.

Peking and Washington, however, see each other as reliably anti-Soviet, although each insists that despite their extensive economic and military contacts there is no alliance. This week, for the first time since before the Communist victory in 1949, a flotilla from the American Seventh Fleet calls in at the northern Chinese port of Qingdao. In Moscow this must look like a Chinese manoeuvre, dating back 2,000 years to the Han dynasty. It was called Yi Yi Zhi Yi: 'Using barbarians to manage barbarians.' □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AND IN THE CENTER OF THE U.S. IS THE PRESIDENT...
WELL, ACTUALLY SLIGHTLY TO THE RIGHT OF CENTER IS THE PRESIDENT...
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When history left the playing fields of Eton

It's 30 years since Britain's international humiliation over Suez. **ROY HATTERSLEY** *examines the man, Prime Minister Anthony Eden, for whom the crisis was a personal Waterloo*

Camera Press

All that glisters . . .

ANTHONY EDEN epitomised the most romantic of all the virtues which were once attributed to the ruling classes. He looked and sounded the personification of effortless superiority. His youth wasn't gilded; it was pure gold. At 20 he was the youngest Brigade Major in the British army. Eighteen years later he became the youngest Foreign Secretary in the modern political era. Along the way he won a Military Cross and a First in Oriental Languages, founded (with Lord David Cecil) the Uffizzi Society 'to discuss painters and paintings past and present', wrote a slim volume of travel essays and decided that his future lay in foreign policy.

He chose, of course, the patrician route towards his destiny. If he 'ever seriously thought of the Diplomatic Service as a career' he rejected the idea. 'He had read Lord Curzon's classic volumes and realised that Parliament was an alternative approach to foreign affairs.'

Of course, the successes — and the succession of ministries — were not really achieved without hard work and sacrifice. He chose to stay with his regiment in France rather than to take the first chance of becoming a staff officer, worked hard at Oxford instead of wasting time on the Union and social superficialities and struggled on with his essays even when he found writing dull and arduous. But he seemed to possess the character, temperament and intellect which ensured brief tenure of the highest political office. Yet today, if he is remembered at all, it is as the name of a hat now worn only by undertakers and as the architect of the Suez fiasco, a national catastrophe which ended his career.

Until Suez he was everybody's darling: he did the right thing so naturally and so often. In 1941 (after he had resigned from the Foreign Office over Chamberlain's policy towards Mussolini and become Foreign Secretary again in Churchill's coalition) the Prime Minister judged that 'he would equally well charge a battery or go to the stake for his principles — even though the principle might be misconceived and he might charge the battery from the wrong angle'. In 1954, Churchill (Prime Minister again) was incapacitated by a stroke. His condition was kept from the country, not least to ensure the succession for Eden, who was himself recovering from an operation. Meanwhile, other contenders for the Premiership (including R. A. Butler, whose ambition Churchill was determined to frustrate) were preparing a series of caretaker administrations to hold the fort until Eden was ready to assume command. He was not so much born with a silver spoon in his mouth as constantly showered with solid gold cutlery. Yet the years of promise ended in abject failure.

The trivial explanation of the mighty fall was Eden's personal vanity: the difficulty he was said to find in even considering the possibility that he might be wrong about his chosen subject of foreign affairs. An only slightly less superficial analysis puts it all down to the agony of waiting for almost 20 years for the elevation from heir presumptive to undisputed monarch. In the last half dozen years of his political life, Eden was certainly handicapped by ill heath, both supposed and genuine. And his apologists have attributed his Suez aberration to an irrational, though laudable, detestation of tyrants and appeasement which made him wholly incapable of treating Nasser's threats against the Suez Canal with calm objectivity.

But none of that quite explains the mess he made of the whole Suez episode. In his biography*, Robert Rhodes James offers a new and ingenious explanation. The mess was really less of Eden's responsibility than we have been led to believe. Indeed the blurb on the dust jacket (in an unintended turn through 360 degrees) insists that, on the subject of the final debacle, 'opinions have been changing over the past thirty years and are likely to change again after this account from hitherto secret British and other sources'. I doubt it.

That is not to denigrate Rhodes James' work. *Anthony Eden* is not as good as his *Rosebery*. But then his *Rosebery* was very good indeed. His latest book — the 13th Rhodes James in 27 years — is well written, well researched and well worth reading. It is also hugely biased. In dismissing the criticism of Nigel Nicholson ('whose political career was to be destroyed by the Suez crisis') and emphasising Butler's recognition that Eden's patriotism was quite different from the jingoism that the Suez adventure inspired, Rhodes James lapses into hagiology:

> As his life and career had shown, Anthony Eden was a warm blooded, sensitive and emotional man, with strong feelings on men and events. He put great store on high standards of conduct, good manners, personal relationships, friendship and integrity . . . Thus, in Eden's eyes, what Nasser had done was a callous betrayal of his solemn pledge and agreements which was despicable in itself . . . He now posed a great threat to British and western interests.

I suspect that Rhodes James knows that he is open to the allegation of over generosity that haunts every 'official' (i.e. family approved) biographer. For when he includes Hugh Gaitskell in his list of culprits who either failed to communicate with or failed to support the beleaguered Prime Minister he actually editorialises a little aside about how he has 'consistently endeavoured to be fair to everyone involved'. He has certainly succeeded in that object within his description of the *volte-face* which ended the squalid deception and war: 'Eden, himself desperately tired and disillusioned, felt that he could no longer stand against this combined pressure of the Opposition, his own Cabinet and the United States.'

The truth is that Eden alternately dithered and lost his temper. Perhaps he never actually lost his nerve. But he was outmanoeuvred by Foster Dulles in America, outflanked by Macmillan at home and outfaced by Colonel Nasser in the Middle East. It is impossible not to believe that the day when the Egyptians decided to nationalise the canal was the moment when the shine wore off. The past had all been too golden, the progress too smooth, the ascent too certain and the success too apparently effortless. Eden was humiliated by men with dirt underneath their fingernails who had climbed more slowly to the top.

Anthony Eden could never happen again. He was one of the last shadows cast by the sunlight of the long Edwardian afternoon. Romantics will regret the passing of such an elegant species and sentimental Conservatives, like Robert Rhodes James, will think of the Tory Party he led as more admirably gentle that that which Margaret Thatcher leads today. All of which may well be true. But, at the moment of crisis, Anthony Eden lacked the merit which is supposed to characterise the ruling classes. He could not lead. Suddenly, despite all the effort, he was inferior to the politicians around him. □

*Anthony Eden *by Robert Rhodes James (Weidenfeld, £16.95).*

Through Egyptian eyes

PETER HENNESSY, *co-director of the Institute of Contemporary British History, assesses two new accounts of the crisis by contemporary insiders*

THE HISTORIOGRAPHY of the Suez Affair has entered a new phase for the 30th anniversary of the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt: that of the

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literate insider, the privileged observer rather than the principal actor.

In the summer we had the posthumous, diary-based account of William Clark, Sir Anthony Eden's Downing Street Press Secretary: *From Three Worlds*. Now we have two further offerings: Evelyn Shuckburgh's *Descent to Suez*[1], the intimate view of Eden's Foreign Office private secretary as the guardians of the imperial tradition, desperate to sustain the flow of oil, the lifeblood of the British economy, struggled to control and reverse the crumbling of Britain's informal empire in the Middle East, and the hugely fascinating account of a Cairo journalist-cum-insider, Mohamed Heikal, with his *Cutting the Lion's Tail*[2].

The product of the literate insider is often far more pleasurable than the standard politician's memoir; though there are exceptions, like the feline prose of 'Rab' Butler's *The Art of the Possible*. While on *that* subject, how's this for cattiness on the Whitehall gossip circuit in Shuckburgh's diary entry for 5 March 1954? At a private secretaries' cocktail party in the Cabinet Office, a collective whinge develops about Butler, then Chancellor of the Exchequer:

> Norman [Sir Norman Brook, Secretary of the Cabinet] attributes his character to the fact that Mrs Butler ought to have been a man — is a man — so that Rab has become a woman. I said, pity both Chancellor and Foreign Secretary [Eden] should be women.

Enough of these bitchy sideshows, with which the Shuckburgh diaries are deliciously replete. New light on Suez is what concerns us here. Tragically, Shuckburgh moves from the centre of events (after serving Eden he became FO Under Secretary for Middle East Affairs) to the periphery (senior civilian instructor at the Imperial Defence College) a month before Nasser nationalised the canal, though his diary does contain one gem from those febrile pre-invasion days in the autumn of 1956. Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, Permanent Secretary at the FO and virtually the sole 100-per-cent supporter of Eden's Suez policy in the office, confined himself in his own tight-lipped memoir, *The Inner Circle*, to this statement:

> When the history of this time [Suez] comes to be written there will be disagreement on many points but none on the disastrous consequences of the persistent Anglo-American differences on every single issue in the Middle East. Failure to secure concord has done more to weaken the standing of the West and to stimulate the Communist appetite for aggression than any other factor since the war.

Thanks to Shuckburgh, when the future histories of Suez are drafted, the real Kirkpatrick view, delivered *fortissimo* on 24 September 1956, is there for the quoting:

> Never have I heard such black pessimism. Set off by some mild criticism I made of the PM's handling of the Suez crisis, he said the PM was the only man in England who wanted the nation to survive; that all the rest of us have lost the will to live; that in two year's time Nasser will have deprived us of our oil, the sterling area fallen apart, no European defence possible, unemployment and unrest in the UK and our standard of living reduced to that of the Yugoslavs or Egyptians.

Shuckburgh's diaries, taken as a whole, help explain how intelligent, seasoned diplomatists like Eden and Kirkpatrick could be driven to a desperate enterprise like Suez to stop the rot, to put a stopper on Nasser-inspired nationalism across the Middle East and to push back the predatory Americans who had done so much, with hard economic diplomacy camouflaged in duplicitous anti-colonialist rhetoric, to reduce a once solid British imperial position to the condition of putty. Shuckburgh is an excellent witness, too, to the fragility of Eden's temperament even before the surgeon's scalpel slipped catastrophically during his 1953 gall bladder operation, and to the accumulation of setbacks in Middle Eastern policy which drove that subtle mind of Eden's to conceive of Nasser as the new Hitler who had to be destroyed.

As Shuckburgh (who never sympathised with the Suez Group or the war party of autumn 1956) departed from Whitehall for the IDC, he noted in his diary (20 June 1956): 'I find it intolerable to have to work in this hopeless hatred, and exasperating that we should be too inflexible to make any counter moves. It looks as if Nasser were now completely under Communist influence, and he is playing a role amongst the Great Powers for which there is no justification in the strength of his country.' In what, with hindsight, is a remarkable prophecy, Shuckburgh concluded, 'The writing on the wall is there all right, but he [Nasser] may destroy a lot of things before he is brought down.'

Mohamed Heikal is admirably succinct in describing what his friend Gamal Abdul Nasser did bring down: 'The political and military war which was fought out at Suez is not over, though some of the battle-lines have changed. Of the three principal forces which interacted on one another thirty years ago, one, Britain, has ceased to have any major role to play. But the other two, America and Arab nationalism, are left confronting each other . . .' Heikal's volume, Suez as seen from the other end of the telescope, has two virtues: as an antidote to many, including myself, who tend to see Suez as the sharp benchmark it undoubtedly was on the British road from 1945 while underplaying its wider significance in Middle Eastern and international affairs; the other is its pricelessness as a record compiled by a trained journalist who, at crucial moments, stood literally at Nasser's elbow.

It was the hapless British Foreign Secretary, Selwyn Lloyd, on a visit to Cairo in March 1956, who planted the germ of an idea in Heikal's mind. Lloyd had told Nasser the Suez Canal was vital, 'a part of the whole oil complex'. Once the Americans and the British had decided not to fund the Aswan High Dam, Heikal thought Egypt should press for half the dues from the Suez Canal to help fund it, the analogy being the 50:50 agreements between the oil companies and the oil-producing nations of the Middle East. He phones Nasser, is told to say no more and to come to the Egyptian president's home in the suburbs.

> Nasser was dressed in grey slacks and a short-sleeved shirt. 'I think our minds must have been working on the same lines', he said to me. 'But why fifty-fifty? Why not a hundred per cent?'
>
> I was taken aback, momentarily, by the audacity of the idea: 'It's too much', I said. 'Why is it too much?' asked Nasser.
>
> To that, I realised, there was no answer.

'That' was 21 July 1956. Five days later Nasser told his startled Cabinet in Alexandria he was about to nationalise the Canal, pausing briefly to ask his Minister of Supply if Egypt could withstand a blockade, before announcing the news to 50,000 near-delirious fellow countrymen in the main square.

Heikal provides much salt for the wounds of those who still feel Britain was 'betrayed' in 1956 by the Americans, the Labour party, wobblers in the Commonwealth and the uncertain state of British public opinion. It was, for example, Mrs Pandit, Nehru's sister and the Indian High Commissioner in London, who 'advised Nasser that he had better watch the activities of a certain General Stockwell'. Stockwell, the Egyptians later discovered, was the chief planner for the Anglo-French invasion. And, according to Heikal, the verbal assaults on Eden in the Commons and the great Trafalgar Square demonstration on the day before the landings, convinced Nasser that 'their failure was inevitable' and he cancelled plans to flee Cairo for the Nile Delta where he was to have turned himself into a guerilla leader.

Shuckburgh and Heikal do not change the big picture of Suez — the collusion with Israel and Egypt, the collapse of British power in the Middle East — but they fill detail and colour into both the portraits of the participants and the landscapes over which they roamed. Both have become instant standards of the literature.

[1]Descent to Suez: Diaries 1951-56 *by Evelyn Shuckburgh (Weidenfeld, £14.95)*

[2]Cutting the Lion's Tail: Suez through Egyptian Eyes *by Mohamed H. Heikal (Deutsch, £12.95)*

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ARTS

CINEMA

Out of step

Judith Williamson

Ginger and Fred (15)
Gate Notting Hill, Cannon Tottenham Court Road

The pasta replicated in the present: Fellini confronts the postmodernist world

WHERE DOES AUTHENTICITY lie in a world infinitely replicated by video, computer, and representations which are as much about other representations as about a real world? This is the question which preoccupies theorists of postmodernism (whose answer, incidentally, is 'nowhere'); and in a sense it preoccupies everyone in a world increasingly experienced through electronic media at a time of breakdown in social and political consensus. If our identity no longer fits snugly into place in an ordered world, how indeed can we have an authentic sense of ourselves? While theorists have diagnosed a loss of depth, of sincerity, of *affect* in this 'postmodern' world, movies have taken it to the logical conclusion of videodrome addiction, computer warfare, and — significantly — have turned 'replicant' into an everyday word.

Ginger and Fred confronts the problem of sincerity in a world of spectacle — but neither by theorising nor by projecting it into the future: Fellini the showman, who so often looks backward (or inward) for his circus material, has no need in this project to search beyond the surface of modern life itself. Fellini has always *produced* a good spectacle; yet here, in perhaps his most finely controlled film, he lets go the role of ringmaster which instead is dispersed through the anonymous forms of advertising and TV. His film as it were *consumes* the repetitions of sausages, slogans, sex on hoardings; the enormous promotional pig's trotter bedecked with fairy lights hanging in the station: the fragments of food and bodies which endlessly re-form the same patterns across the chaotic and decaying landscape of the city.

This kaleidoscopic diffusion of subjectivity finds a straightfoward analogy in the de-regulation of Italian TV, the backdrop for Ginger and Fred's story. Ginger and Fred are, in fact, Amelia (Guilietta Masina) and Pippo (Marcello Mastroianni), elderly tap-dancers whose Rogers/Astaire act broke up after its popularity in the Forties and Fifties and who are brought together again to appear on a special TV show. De-regulated television is a multi-channelled stream of aerobics and sf, recipes and romance, interspersed with endless salamis, roasts, sauce-tasting competitions; and the variety show itself is a bizarre collection of lookalikes ('Woody Allen over here please', 'Kafka and Clark Gable come to the lobby'), weirdos (a woman in love with an extra-terrestrial, a dog that's been whimpering since the pope died) and celebrities (a famous admiral, a transvestite in a highly publicised court case). This may sound like a typical whacky Fellini scenario — but it is much more. Not only is TV de-regulated, so are emotions and values in society at large: which is why this film brings so clearly to mind the idea of the'postmodern condition'. Meaning itself is dispersed and spread — in a sort of parody of democracy — with equal lack of emphasis across every facet of contemporary life, from the street to the screen; and this equality extends to the surface of the film itself, which will cut from a 'narrative' shot (e.g. Amelia in her hotel room) to a group of tiny people dancing round a giant plate of pasta, with no frame, no lines, nothing to mark the TV commercial as different from any other reality.

But instead of just revelling in his meat-market of imagery, Fellini explores it both through and against the sensibility of his central characters — who are both, in a sense, past their 'time' or at least the time when their values meshed with the society around them. Tenderly but without nostalgia, in the affect-less present where edible panties come in eleven fruit flavours plus tuna-and-onion, Fellini traces the complex and contradictory emotions of their reunion — Amelia, a respectable bourgeois grandmother with a small business, and Pippo, drifter and drinker, whose unrest conceals wasted warmth and intelligence. Both Masina and Mastroianni are superb, moving one to the most utterly un-postmodern feelings — which is part of the film's extraordinary finesse. For, however real their emotions, 'Ginger' and 'Fred' don't represent a simple reality posed against the artificiality of TV; rather they themselves stand for a different kind of showmanship.

Their act is an imitation, and yet contains the truth of their relationship: in it, they perform the emotions which they cannot repeat when, in an echo of their stage setting, they part at the station. Their most intimate exchange comes when a power cut suddenly stops the whole show — bringing home the fragility of that surface whose lack of depth contrasts with the profound emotions aroused by the occasion in Amelia and Pippo. As they sit in the dark, there is a moment of openness, caught in the folds of the TV glitz and glamour — both separate from it and, in a way, produced by it, a high pitch of intensity which cannot be matched in the light of day.

It is because Fellini is such a master of spectacular cinema that the ambivalence he brings to this image-world is so poignant. There is something reminiscent of Yeats — another great wielder of imagery — moving from 'it was the dream itself enchanted me' to the 'foul rag and bone shop of the heart' in 'The Circus Animals' Desertion'. Even the film's music suggests ambivalence, partly composed of the Astaire/Rogers dance music, elegant and familiar, but partly composed of the looped theme music of the TV show itself: *Ginger and Fred* is at once *being* the show, *bringing* us the show, and at the same time *showing* us how much it *can't* show. Fellini is as flamboyant as ever, but unusually gentle and serious too: it seems relevant that the dance at the centre of the film is the *'hesitation'*.

For in many ways his world, where trendy

TRAILERS

Michael Powell introduces his 1950 classic, *Gone to Earth*, in a special screening at Filmhouse Edinburgh on Thursday 20 November. Further details from Filmhouse on 031–228 2688.

Alchemists of the Surreal continues at the Plymouth Arts Centre on Tuesday 18 November with a programme including Bunuel's and Dali's *Un Chien Andalou* and work by Jan Svankmajer and the brothers Quay. Details from 0752-660060.

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young producers in leather jackets show no interest in or respect for the people they direct, is a bleak one; yet it has its share of softness and joy. There is a beautiful scene where, after Amelia has been disillusioned to find that her new friend is a transvestite, she watches 'her' and her friends dancing on the waste ground in front of a night club, a neon no-man's land without judgment or gender — and she almost joins in, watching a little wistfully from the shadows. And here is Fellini the ringmaster, watching the surface circus of modern media. The 'flying priest' on the TV show says, 'Everything in life is a miracle, it is up to us to find it in all that we survey.' However trite it sounds, the film does just that; surveying the modern world with a simultaneous sense of richness and loss. □

TELEVISION

Hot air

Hugo Williams

WHAT A GOOD LITTLE rape-backlash play **Home Cooking** (ITV) by Paula Milne was last week. Prunella Scales, best known as Mrs Basil Fawlty, here played a suspiciously quiet hotel keeper, while her husband might almost have been the sinister other half of Basil himself, unfunny -isms worn for real.

As rape reports flooded the airwaves in Scales' overworked kitchen we were given to understand that she thought her husband to be the wanted man; but she continued with her 'home cooking' long after the real rapist was arrested, just because men are men and 'Dead men don't rape' — as the lady wrote on the Cenotaph in Bristol the other day. Her system of remedial treatment will have done nothing for sauna bath sales in the UK.

Anyone who could find the key to men's magazines, we learnt on the spunky **South of Watford** (ITV), would unlock the door to untold riches. The fact that men won't buy magazines for men was the first good thing I had heard about men for ages and stiffened my resolve to cancel the *TV Times* which now resembles a *foie-gras* goose gorged with pre-Christmas crapulence and is impossible to find any programmes in. Women want to know how to be better women but men don't care, is the thinking on the subject and one wouldn't want to question that. We saw men in the street being asked to carry a rag called *Black Tie* for a few yards and they all folded it inwards and stuffed it quickly under their arms, body language for shame, we were told. However, all that inward-foldingness is going to change now that the revered Nick Logan of *The Face* has cast his eye on the problem. 'Done by Logan it might just work,' said a mag-man biting his fingernail to the quick.

Believe it or not, the journal we chaps are (not) going to be buying in our thousands is going to be called *Arena*. Yes, the Roman thing, with BBC undertones, etc. Isn't it wonderful? Restrained, yet powerful. And not at all poovish, really. I wonder will it be 'a scene of conflict', a 'sphere of action' (*OED*) as its owners hope, or will it only be a 'sand-strewn place' in the Decline and Fall of Nick Logan? 'Basically what I've tried to achieve is a boy-off-the-farm look,' said a men's-wear stylist for the magazine, his visionary theory being to mix the cheap and the overpriced, a bandana with a £500 jacket for example, 'so that you don't scare people off . . .' Despite the fact that Brylcreem's Ian McPherson has agreed to take space, the embarrassment of the first issue should be something to treasure.

Let's hope that *Executive Stress* (ITV), with Geoffrey Palmer, the second of the two big new comedy series twinned and plugged for the coming Christmas season, is better than the first, **Room at the Bottom** (ITV) with James Bolam. I know we're all desperate, but surely here, if anywhere, is an example of needless television.

It was obviously written out of experience. A TV drama producer has been demoted to Head of Games Shows and barricaded himself in his office in protest. (The last straw was Paul Scofield backing out of his production of *The Winslow Boy*.) He'll come out on one condition: someone pays the tea-lady for Scofield's three pieces of cheesecake. 'The other producers are jealous because I'm a friend of Lindsay Anderson,' he shouts through the door. While all this real-name comedy was going on I was miles away, conjuring Scofield's bloodhound features, probably playing Sir Thomas Moore, being asked one morning on the telephone if he minded being mentioned, very respectfully of course, in a new comedy series. 'Well, so long as you don't ridicule me too much I suppose it's all right,' says Scofield, shuffling off to have his bath and taking with him, one would guess, about three-quarters of *Room At The Bottom*'s viewing figures. □

DANCE

Pas de deux

Stephanie Jordan

Dance is often televised, rarely televisual. A new TV workshop, Dance-lines, shows what real collaboration between the two media might achieve

DURING THE BBC'S 50th Anniversary replays, you may have caught Margaret Dale's 1965 TV studio version of *The Firebird*. Though it now seems creaky, it is representative of the work of its producer, a pioneer, well aware of the lack of choreographers then willing to create specially for TV. Since then, choreographers have changed — they want to experiment given the chance, but opportunities for them to tackle the medium have been few.

Astonishing, you might say, in the light of our advanced and internationally acclaimed TV, and of the history of valuable video experiment abroad. But here, though we've seen dance coverage increase in recent years and widen to include the experimental as well as the classics, contributions are still largely what BBC dance producer Bob Lockyer calls 'football match' productions, the big ballet companies in outside broadcast. Some programmes have benefitted from care and time, but many have not — homely, passionless experiences, for those who know the stage works, favourite moments lost, the magic gone, the poor choreographer rushed headlong through the technology.

Now, at last, there are changes. As a strand of its policy to expand the TV dance audience and lead viewers into new directions, Channel 4 (with the Gulbenkian Foundation and Digital Equipment Company) has sponsored the TV workshop Dance-lines. A Limehouse production, this has been exploring what a true meeting of media and minds might generate: four weeks at Riverside Studios, one on location and a post-production period, with co-producers Terry Braun and Peter Mumford, choreographers Siobhan Davies and Ian Spink, composer David Owen, a team of eleven dancers and a broadcast TV crew. An immediate aim is a 50-minute programme to go out next May, but another is to suggest future possibilities.

The media have been learning each other's craft, the crew taking part in dance class and learning how to look at movement, the choreographers (and dancers) holding the camera, examining what its different techniques can capture and then creating movement with those techniques in mind. Ian Spink, cynical after previous experiences, now discovers he can have 'a civilised conversation with a TV director'. He's also reached the stage of moulding his choreography entirely in terms of what he sees on the monitor. For choreographers, there is a new language of perception to understand, and a new space, a triangular visual field in which the choices are made for you (rather than by you as in the theatre) with an astonishing depth dimension, but much less side to side vitality; editing introduces new time possibilities, and there is the irksome fact that the same move live may look very different on screen.

Dance-lines searches for its own solutions. Braun, whose background is more pop promo and political documentary than dance, is committed to the TV public and to a working process built on trust, and he unashamedly proclaims his interest in producing good TV rather than good, hermetic dance. He and Mumford are pushing for a dance that cannot be done live, jettisoning the stage values of space, time and whole-body movement, eschewing the traditional notion that dancers need long takes. Davies considers that their theatre interests have undoubtedly emerged: non-dancerly locations predominate.

Post-production editing will alter what the camera has accomplished, but even now the rough-cut material looks different from any other TV or video dance that I've seen. In Davies' piece, the camera pans to discover different activity in different wall-bound spaces, with Matthew Hawkins cutting in like a wild ace. Spink's 17 scenes in six locations will dart back and forth between slices of life, inciting the audience to forge its own connections: marital stress, a fight in a cinema, a woman leaving for a journey (inspired by Edward Hopper's *Western Motel*, with a real Studebaker on set).

Naturally, Dance-lines has headed in the directions that interest those involved. There are many others. It has also proved exciting to use TV capacities to show the dancing straighter and in more spacious circumstances; witness Cunningham's TV work — clean, long phrases in a new 360° arena, approaching the eye in new ways, exploring the extremes of distance and close-up and ingenious methods of filling the flat

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screen with dancing figures. Witness too the energy of the camera of Charles Atlas (Cunningham's erstwhile collaborator) as it dances among the dancers in his fantasy documentary on Michael Clark (C4, 1986). At the other extreme are those whose ideal videodance exists in what critic Richard Lorber calls 'electronically dematerialised presentations . . . dance as a state of mind'.

Most of all, Dance-lines is about knowledge: moving in a direction through informed choice, not because you know of no other. More workshops like this are needed, more directions; but Dance-lines is a great start. □

MUSIC: 1

Blowing in

Charles Fox

Sonny Rollins
Fairfield Hall, Croydon
Steve Lacy
Bloomsbury Theatre

PRESENTDAY SAXOPHONISTS tend to walk around with at least two, sometimes three, instruments tucked beneath their arms or hanging from their necks. Sonny Rollins and Steve Lacy both took up jazz during the Forties when behaviour of that sort seemed ostentatious.

Just as Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young were content to stick to just the tenor saxophone, so Rollins was and is. Lacy took things even further, becoming the only musician, apart from Sidney Bechet, to specialise on the soprano, the most treacherous — and also the most flamboyant — of the saxophone family. Both men arrived in London last week: Rollins from New York, still headquarters for many players of his generation; Lacy from Paris where he has lived ever since the Sixties.

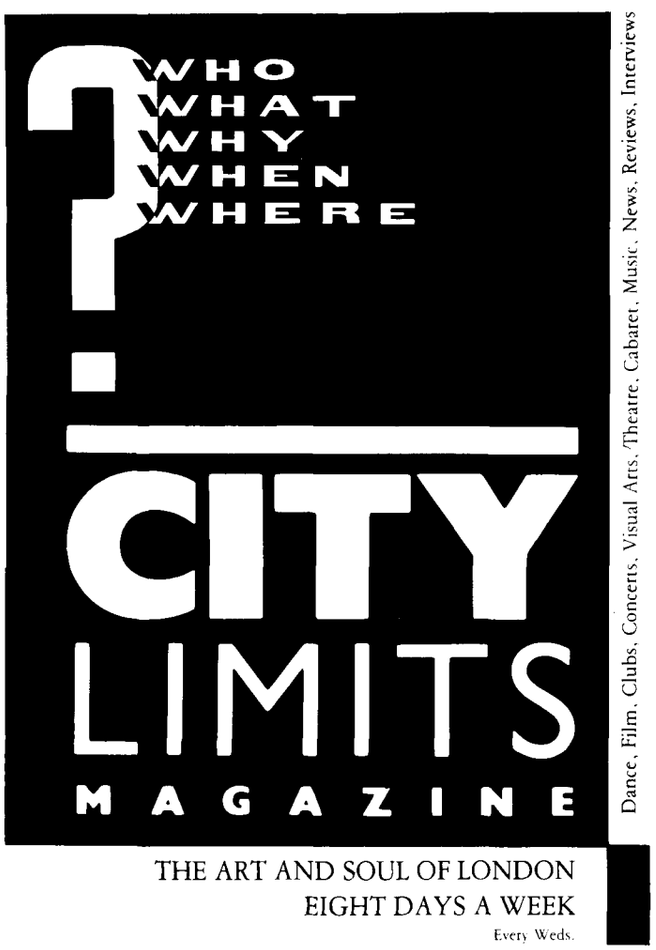
Rollins is one of the major jazz soloists, yet his career has been patchy. There were spells of hibernation, the equivalent of sabbaticals. During the first of those, at the end of the Fifties, he would practise on the Williamsburg Bridge, high above the East River, alone — except when Steve Lacy turned up to duet with him. In recent years Rollins has disappointed some admirers by using rock-based groups, full of electric instruments, a context too rigid to permit him to do what he does best — stretching out, nipping from one theme to another, sometimes alternating a couple (Rollins, unlike most of his contemporaries, has never believed in diligently ploughing through a chord sequence).

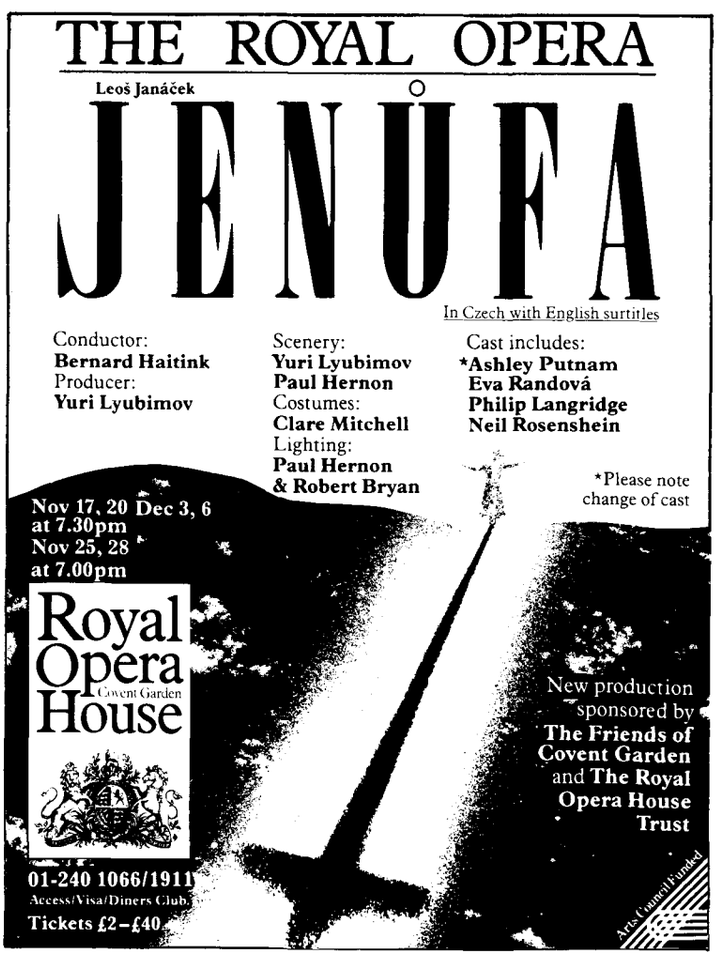
At Croydon he went in for that kind of adventuring, much of it, admittedly, during elaborate and elongated codas. So 'Autumn Nocturne' contained a diversion into 'The Toy Drum Major' (the saxophonist is nothing if not catholic in his enthusiasms). And, no doubt remembering where he was, a sumptuous yet daring version of 'My One And Only Love' metamorphosed into 'A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square'. Far from sounding knavish or perverse, these tactics only confirm Rollins' instinct for form, his ability to build solos from the most unlikely fragments. A further triumph was his rejigging of the mawkish Stevie Wonder song, 'Isn't She Lovely'.

Apart from the bass guitarist, no electric instruments were on hand. And although the trombonist, Clifton Anderson, clung too doggedly to J. J. Johnson's staccato, many-noted style when taking solos, the to-and-fro he and Rollins went in for in 'Don't Stop The Carnival' suggested the right kind of spontaneity.

Steve Lacy, who also grew up in New York, started off as a jazz buff, taking a record collector's pride in knowing about alternative masters and Duke Ellington's obscurer compositions. Inspired to take up the soprano saxophone through hearing Bechet's recording of Ellington's 'The Mooche', he gigged with the likes of Hot Lips Page and Max Kaminsky. A shift in approach came through working first with Thelonious Monk, then with that most drastic of innovators, Cecil Taylor. In Europe his playing took on extra substance, the original flair developing into virtuosity. He has also expanded his scope, collaborating with writers, with dancers, with designers.

Where Sonny Rollins gave the audience at Croydon the kind of performance for which he is renowned — and received a standing ovation in exchange — Lacy is currently touring on the Arts





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WORK IN PROGRESS

Sound of Sharp voices

Naseem Khan

THERE ARE CLEAR SIGNS that it's a battleground: a tension in the air; scepticism in the receptionist's voice as she takes an incoming call, 'Well, the management *says* it'll be open . . .'; on the notice board, the rebels' campaign literature; beneath it, the director's impeccably liberal own notice, instructing his people not to remove the opposition's papers.

White elephant or sanctum, depending on your point of view, Cecil Sharp House, home of the English Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), is permeated by the smell of cordite: a state of hostilities that began some weeks ago with the publication of the EFDSS's new 'The Way Forward'. Three particularly major changes were proposed by the recently appointed director, Jim Lloyd: that the EFDSS's district and area branches should be disbanded; that the society's name should change to 'The Folk Trust of England'; and that — in response to the financial writing on the wall — Cecil Sharp House (referred to, reverently, by folkies as 'the House') should be either sold or redeveloped. All three are highly contentious, but it is the last, because of its urgency, that has brought out the hand grenades and snipers' bullets.

To outsiders all this fuss about a building, a far from attractive one at that, might seem somewhat misplaced. But Cecil Sharp House, put up by public subscription in the early Thirties as a memorial to the great folk pioneer and his work, is far more, for many, than bricks and mortar. 'I'd no more knock a war memorial down as knock down this building,' exclaimed a young man at the troubled open day recently. It was a combination of patriotism, tradition, respect that had several people nodding in agreement.

But the building is an expensive way of demonstrating such feelings. The EFDSS, whose business management has in the main been appalling, has failed to maintain the fabric of the House. Creeping obsolescence has gradually caught up with it and repairs that will, sooner or later, be inevitable, could run, some say, into six figures. All this would be well and good, say Lloyd and his NEC (who unanimously endorsed the Quit the House plan), were the building still appropriate. But, argue the Quitters, today's folk has different needs: soundproofed spaces for amplification; smaller studio-type rooms for classes and workshops. And costs have gone up. The society has not managed to earn more money to cover the House: quite the opposite. Figures to be presented to the members at 22 November's AGM will show a deficit (£49,500) ten times higher than that of the previous financial year. In response to this, the management has decided to close the House and cancel all activities: immediately saving money through wages, but also inviting charges of producing a *fait accompli* from the people who will vote against total closure on 22 November. It is, claim the Friends of Cecil Sharp House, a group formed to spearhead opposition to the closure, both arbitrary and premature. The House with proper management, they claim, could become the thriving folk centre it has hardly been in living memory and could make money too. Although strong on commitment they are not, however, equally strong on details of costing.

The varied crowds who flocked into the House last Saturday were clearly divided, and not just along generational lines. There were plenty who backed a withdrawal from the House. Representatives of the regions, to whom the place has long been a source of irritation and irrelevance, made little demurral. Others, in the less public cafeteria, admitted the House's activities couldn't hold a candle to the vigour of the folk clubs outside its orbit. To them and to the many folkies who are not even part of the EFDSS's 9,000-strong membership, the building and even the society mean very little. 'If Cecil Sharp thought his own memorial was a building,' declared one member forcibly, 'he'd be sick.'

If the vote goes the executive's way on the 22nd — and there's no guarantee that it will — the initiative for folk will then go back to the roots whence it sprang. The EFDSS management will, probably, pack up and take off to a part of the country where grants are large and costs are low, and London will lose its centre.

How dire would that be? The arguments in the House's upstairs hall raged on long after they'd packed up downstairs. The ground was gone over, again and again, in obvious distress. Accusations of mismanagement — 'You're a disgrace to run this House. Your NEC is just diabolical!' — recurred like a bitter folk song chorus.

It's not just one issue. A tangle of functions is involved. There's the EFDSS's work as a campaigning lobby for folk (a greatly needed voice), with educational bodies, funding organisations, local authorities and much more. There's its function as a prestigious promoting venue, the fixer of concerts and classes and courses. There's the research component, the keeper of the archives. What they have in common is that none has been prosecuted over recent years with the singlemindedness they need. If the current crisis shakes up both sides and results in either a more accessible centre or a more forward-looking society, it will have been worth it. Otherwise both will sink and, sadly, the world would not take much heed. □

Next week: Alfred Fagon: death of a blackman.

Council's Contemporary Music Network (he'll be at Bristol this Friday and Saturday, in Huddersfield just after the weekend) with what is sometimes called a multi-media piece. *Futurities* has two dancers — one African, Elsa Wolliaston; the other American, Douglas Dunn — interpreting poems by Robert Creeley. These are read — mostly inaudibly on the night I attended — by Irene Aebi, using *sprechtgesang* in a way that converts Creeley's terse American lines into Brechtian declamation. In the background hung one of the production's undoubted successes, an inverted triangle (Lacy calls it 'an altar') designed by Kenneth Noland, its colours altering slowly and mysteriously.

Douglas Dunn appears to have a high reputation among dance critics. Yet to a layman like myself the kind of pottering about that he and his partner go in for created a sense of torpor. And Lacy's choice of a limited number of pitches as the basis for each sequence contributed to that pedestrianism. The setting of 'Train Going By' had the pianist momentarily throwing in a couple of bars from Meade Lux Lewis' 'Honky Tonk Train Blues', that classic venture into metaphor. Yet the band went on to do little more than imitate the cruder noises heard when locomotives thunder past.

A pity, for excellent musicians were on hand — notably the saxophonist Steve Potts, the drummer Oliver Johnson, the trombonist Glenn Ferris. In the second half — musically superior to the first — they even worked up an easy swing from time to time, riffing handsomely behind 'For No Clear Reason'. And whenever Lacy himself took a solo there was no doubt about his stature as an improviser.

Lacy has never lacked the courage to follow his star and in France, at any rate, this package has gone down well, even been acclaimed. Without the capering, and with words that could at least be heard, it might fare better on the British circuit. Meanwhile Lacy should seek consolation in the favourite saying of one of his old heroes and mentors, the clarinettist Pee Wee Russell: 'The more you try, the luckier you are.' □

MUSIC: 2

Overload

Andrew Clements

The Mand who Mistook his Wife for a Hat
ICA until 16 November

THE EXTRAORDINARY and moving story of Dr P, as told by the neurologist Oliver Sacks, is underpinned by music. Dr P suffered from a brain disorder that robbed him of his visual sense; while his ability to apprehend abstract shapes was unimpaired, he could no longer recognise the faces of those around him, or perceive everyday objects for what they were. Attempting to wrench his wife's head from her shoulders because he took her for his hat was only the most spectacular of his mistakes. He managed to keep his life together only through music; by singing to himself he could reinvent the world, carry out his daily tasks. For

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Dr P, Sacks observes, music 'had taken the place of image. He had no body-image, he had body-music'.

The posters describe Michael Nyman's theatre piece based on Sacks' case study as a 'chamber opera'. Michael Morris and Christopher Rawlence have adapted the original, fleshed out the character of the neurologist himself, pared away the medical references and some other details and framed the action as a lecture given by Dr S, the neurologist. The whole enterprise has received Sacks' imprimatur; in the ICA's programme he describes it as the first 'neurological opera', the theme 'preordained for the form'.

In a very basic sense, though, music is the last thing the story needs. Music is at its core; the tunes that Mr P needs to get through the day, and the music of Schumann that he loves so much and which he is still able to read and to perform, are integral to the case; the addition of another layer to enhance, intensify or comment upon the action is perfectly redundant, whether it be provided by Nyman or any other composer.

Nyman has found more fame and fortune than any other British minimalist, largely through his collaborations with Peter Greenaway on projects such as *The Draughtsman's Contract* and *A Zed and Two Noughts*. His style is less pure, more refreshingly rough-edged than that of his American congeners like Reich and Glass; he works with the dog-ends of musical styles, picking up tags from here and there and arranging them into bright, perky patterns, crossing cultural divides between pop, jazz and 'classical' with breezy insouciance. At its best his music is lively and carefully targeted; its tongue never strays far from its cheek, its brow never aspires too high. He has established a style of vocal writing that is quickly recognisable and which surfaces in the opera in the lines for Mrs P: high-lying patterns that soar above the closely meshed repetitions of the accompaniment.

But it's a style that does not transfer convincingly to male voices; the writing for Dr P and the neurologist is unremarkable. Everything here, predictably, is generated from Schumann; the A minor String Quartet supplies an important progression, the song *'Ich grolle nicht'* from *Dichterliebe*, which is sung in the opera by Dr P and creates a moving centrepiece, resonates through the textures thereafter, and other fragments turn up from time to time. The whole structure is artfully and fluently put together, but there is never a suggestion that the layers of music and narrative can collide or collude at any point. In a story without climax or conclusion the sense of a dramatic form shaped by music (the definition of an opera for most people) never emerges.

In some ways Nyman seems to have been inhibited by his concern to write an opera, rather than an unclassifiable but possibly more characteristically inventive theatre piece. The vitality of his best music deserts him; there is a great deal of dutiful pattern-making supporting lines that could just as effectively have been spoken rather than sung. The whole enterprise begs two questions: why turn a perfectly effective piece of literature into drama at all, and why go further still and make it an *opera*: a musical extravangaza fated to test the enterprise to destruction. □

Books

Camera Press

BIOGRAPHY

Bad faith

Eamonn McArdle

Writing Against: A Biography of Sartre
RONALD HAYMAN *Weidenfeld* £14.95

RONALD HAYMAN'S biography of Sartre is informative, thoroughly researched and well written. Together with the recently published life of Sartre by Annie Cohen-Solal (the author of a memorable biography of Sartre's friend and *alter ego* Paul Nizan) due out soon in English translation, Hayman's study will doubtless provide a starting point for any future evaluation of Sartre's work.

The main phases of Sartre's career are well known. In recalling them, however, Hayman manages to present new exhibits and call upon fresh witnesses for the prosecution and the defence in order to bring his subject to life.

In the beginning was the word, or words. Sartre titled the only two sections of his autobiographical essay evoking his formative early years 'Reading' and 'Writing'. He emerged from a cosseted childhood and adolescence — indecently prolonged by the rites of passage peculiar to the once prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure in the rue d'Ulm in Paris — possessed by a sacerdotal conception of his writerly vocation. After military service he settled down to an uneventful career as a provincial lycée teacher and devoted himself to writing.

Sartre negotiated the troubled pre-war decade by avoiding the political entanglements of his contemporaries. He immersed himself in *belles lettres* and in the study of Husserl and Heidegger. But whereas his college friend Nizan had found in Heidegger, by way of reaction, additional reasons for his commitment to Marxism, Sartre found chiefly the instruments he needed to fashion a corrosive and apolitical psychology. The fruits of this period of his life formed the basis of Sartre's later reputation.

In the novel *Nausea* (1938), the short story collection *Intimacy* (1939), the essay in 'phenomenological ontology', to quote the subtitle of *Being and Nothingness* (1943) and the stage play *In Camera* (1944), Sartre rehearsed a medley of themes that have since become commonplace: the death of God; the experience of contingency; despair; freedom; authenticity; bad faith. Popularised by a number of throwaway lines ('Man is a useless passion', 'Hell is other people'), his ideas appeared to offer to a public in the immediate post-war years an intelligible if sombre account of the human condition, 'by nature an unhappy consciousness with no chance of escaping its unhappy fate'.

A great deal of ink has flowed on these themes since then. It is of more than anecdotal interest therefore to discover here how much of what Sartre wrote on this subject was merely a *literary pose*, as he admitted in an interview with Benny Lévy published towards the end of his life and reproduced in part by Hayman: 'I talked about despair, but it's nonsense. I talked about it because

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it was being talked about; it was fashionable . . . I've never experienced despair, nor seen it as a quality that could be mine . . .'

So much for authenticity.

Politics caught up with Sartre in the shape of World War Two. From 1943 onwards he began to contribute to the Resistance journal *Combat* and this involvement plunged him into the maelstrom as a political commentator and controversialist after the end of the war. Unhappily for Sartre he entered the political fray just as the Cold War began to freeze the limits of political discussion for all but desperadoes. As a result the debates he joined with other figures of the left intelligentsia around the review *Les Temps Modernes* in the Forties and Fifties rarely attained the existential intensity, the vigour or the clarity of the exemplary debates of the Twenties between the Surrealists, *Clarté*ists and the French Communist Party when the PCF still afforded a forum for critical discussion. The devaluation of intellectual currency in the interval that separates these two historical moments seems palpable. In Sartre's personal case the loss was threefold.

In political terms the reigning dogmatism and polarities entailed for Sartre an unconditional, if occasionally critical, alignment with the Soviet Union and the PCF between the end of the war and 1968. He performed the usual self-lobotomy of the Stalinist intellectual even while remaining outside the Party. On his return from the Soviet Union in 1954 he announced that he had found 'total freedom of criticism in the USSR . . . I met a new breed of man'. As late as the Sixties he could fend off criticism of the Soviet Union with an exercise in double think that has since become notorious: 'We mustn't demoralise [the workers of] Billancourt.' The notable exception to this counter-conformism was his public role in mobilising opposition to the Algerian and Vietnamese wars.

In the theoretical domain Sartre concluded in the Fifties on the need to develop Marxism, and he undertook to furnish it with a 'subjective' complement in order to 'reconquer man inside Marxism'. The resulting *Critique of Dialectical Reason* (1960) played little part, however, in the return to Marx, the recovery of utopian socialism or the rereading of Marxism and the history of the workers' movement that characterised the emergence of a New Left in France and elsewhere. Despite Hayman's claim, moreover, it is doubtful if 'existential Marxism' played any part whatever in the events of May '68, though Sartre's *Critique* has provided more than one academic commentator with an entirely speculative framework through which to reinterpret them. The point to note is that the ahistorical categories of the *Critique* could as well be applied to any 'revolution' at any time in the past. Hayman also verges upon the realm of fantasy in having Sartre father the Situationist International.

In the field of *belles lettres* Sartre was also badly scarred by his time. In *What is Literature* (1947) he proposed a combative role for the 'committed' writer. On the one hand he attacked aestheticism, poetry in general and the Surrealists in particular. (Hayman offers a few interesting items on the personal sources of Sartre's hostility to poetry.) On the other he attacked the merely utilitarian considerations of socialist realism. Attempting a difficult balancing act in an effort to find a third way Sartre nevertheless fell victim in *What is Literature* to the very intellectual dogmatism he correctly excoriated in the positions of the Communists. His subsequent abandonment of imaginative writing illustrates better than any commentary the corner he had boxed himself into through the contradictory demands he placed on the writer.

Sartre describes in his autobiographical piece *Words* the curious effect that the invention of photography had had on his grandfather Charles Schweitzer who, in later life, would self-consciously 'strike an attitude' in front of others as if 'at the behest of some invisible photographer'. Hayman insists on a similar self-consciousness on Sartre's part, that he was always living autobiographically, as though with one eye on his biographers to come. Against the odds, this biographer presents a reasoned and persuasive though less than compelling case for the integrity of Sartre's 'divagations'. History may deal less kindly with one of the century's greatest self-confessed poseurs. □

CRIME

Knacker's yard

Nick Kimberley

WHEN OLD RACE HORSES no longer cut the mustard, they're allowed to retire gracefully. Not so thriller writers — which brings me to Dick Francis. **Bolt** (Michael Joseph, £9.95) is his 25th racetracker thriller and, like many of its predecessors, it's taken up with wealth, opulence and lineage. Kit Fielding, a well-bred jockey not at all like those you see interviewed on TV, rides horses for a princess whose family's vast but honourable business is threatened by an uncouth partner. Fielding sees off this loudmouth, and any other villains, while still managing to ride a few winners, take a few falls.

As you might expect from a man whose autobiography is called *The Sport of Queens*, there's little time spent with the lowly punter who,

Daniela Mrazkova and Vladimir Remes mounted the impressive Early Soviet Photographers exhibition in 1982 and ANOTHER RUSSIA (Thames & Hudson, £12.95) adds a contemporary perspective to their editorial project. It discloses photographic perceptions that are spacious and reflective by contrast with the tightly choreographed documentary vision that characterises our more image-saturated western world. Yet sensibilities vary as much as the physical geography pictured here — from the Tartar steppes to the Baltic states (where, as in Britain, the Seventies saw a flowering of the medium). Whether with ethnographic directness, a dream-textured pastoral lyricism or squinting at the world with the fresh curiosity of a child's-eye view, these 18 photographers follow the humanist impulse to describe and celebrate everyday experience rather than capture its unsuspectedly revealing gestures and attitudes. They render the ordinariness of what to us are simultaneously remote, enigmatic worlds, almost of another time: Lithuanian country markets, nomadic communities, travelling circuses, city streets. A handsome, well-annotated volume that deservedly makes known the work of a new generation. Above: from 'Village Markets, 1972-84' by Aleksandras Matsiyauskas. (Liz Heron)

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in the real world, makes the jockey's efforts meaningful. In fact, horses and courses are incidental colouring, endearing to those who like racing, off-putting to the rest of us. What matters is protecting the lovely princess and her money. Fielding shows a commendable desire to prevent the weapons industry from sullying that wealth — not, though, because guns in themselves are to be shunned, but simply to ensure that no terrorists are armed out of the family's trading. Terrorists, after all, are unprincipled lunatics whose actions are merely self-serving. Ironic, then, that throughout the novel Fielding insists that the police should not be called in — as he says, he has taken justice into his own hands. Isn't that one definition of terrorism?

At one level, Gillian Slovo's **Death by Analysis** (Women's Press, £3.95) couldn't be more dissimilar. Here is a committed left-wing writer trying to write responsible genre fiction which will reflect her commitment. Against Francis' world of privilege, where underlings are happy to muck in, Slovo presents radical journalists, life in Hackney and psychotherapy. Like Kit Fielding in *Bolt*, Slovo's Kate Baeier is called in so as to avoid the cops — who, on the very first page, are established as thugs. That same first page laboriously contrasts the Royal Wedding of 1981 with rocketing unemployment, dying hunger strikers and riots on the streets. This is cumbersome, a way of locating politics for those who already agree with you. In that sense, Slovo's novel is as comfortable as *Bolt*. Much has been written about the radical potential of popular fiction, but that potential isn't realised by a simple insertion of left-wing characters. Slovo's impatience with the strictures imposed by the thriller is suggested by a series of intrusive scenes reiterating Baeier's earlier experiences of therapy. They seem to suggest that this is the book Slovo really wants to write.

The individual novels of Len Deighton's **Game, Set and Match** trilogy (Hutchinson, £12.95) have been assembled into one gigantic volume, which somehow dissipates the tension of reading them separately. In a new introduction, Deighton warns that his narrator, Bernard Samson, isn't necessarily 100 per cent reliable; but since his is the only point of view we have, he dictates the tone of the trilogy. Throughout, the traitorous deeds of spies are paralleled by the more domestic infidelities of couples bent on deception and adulterous dalliance. Samson himself remarks that 'treason and infidelity have too much in common'. The comparison is fatuous — how we relate to our country bears no resemblance to the ways in which we conduct our personal relationships — but the false analogy is now established as part of spy fiction's repertoire.

Deighton takes us to various parts of the world and is never lost for an appropriate anecdote, a revealing local detail. But he is at his most incisive in showing the deadly struggles of office politicking. The ways in which Samson's superior wriggles his way out of responsibility are more fascinating than any account of street food in Mexico or minute dissections of a genuine Berlin accent. For all his range, Deighton is happiest with the local peculiarities which made his Sixties' novels so original. Bernard Samson, a spy caught up in the reflected world of his dead father, never seems the man to drag us through nearly 900 pages. Perhaps the novels would have best been left as separate entities. Still, Deighton is a considerable writer, the only spy novelist who can match the ambitions of Le Carré.

George Simenon's **The Outlaw** (trans. Howard Curtis, Hamish Hamilton, £9.95) was written in 1939 but has only now been translated. It's a compact novel and a deeply pessimistic one. The enforced privations suffered by a Polish emigré in pre-War France lead him to desperate betrayal, violence and eventually murder. For the first half of the book it seems as if his love for his girlfriend Nuschi might be the means to his redemption; the second half obliterates any such optimism. In Simenon's cold and damp world it's inevitable that someone will tread on your chillblains, causing inexpressible agony. By keeping his story down to 150 pages, Simenon ensures that it doesn't degenerate into pastiche; at that length, its bleakness is wonderfully telling.

Loren D. Estleman's **Every Brilliant Eye** (Macmillan, £8.50) is the sixth of his novels whose central character is Amos Walker, private investigator. Walker is almost the *reductio ad absurdum* among current American private eyes: a tough-talking loner, a Vietnam veteran who has lost his wife and his buddy/business partner. His elliptical cynicism is occasionally relieved by some corny poetics, either to do with love or the romance of striding through the concrete jungle. Genre fiction has to stick to the rules or else it wouldn't be genre, but when it sticks to too many it becomes irritating formula. The attempt to inject realism by the continual references to Vietnam is misguided; there are more pressing problems in America than watching the country come to terms with its guilt complex. □

EVOLUTION

Species of origins

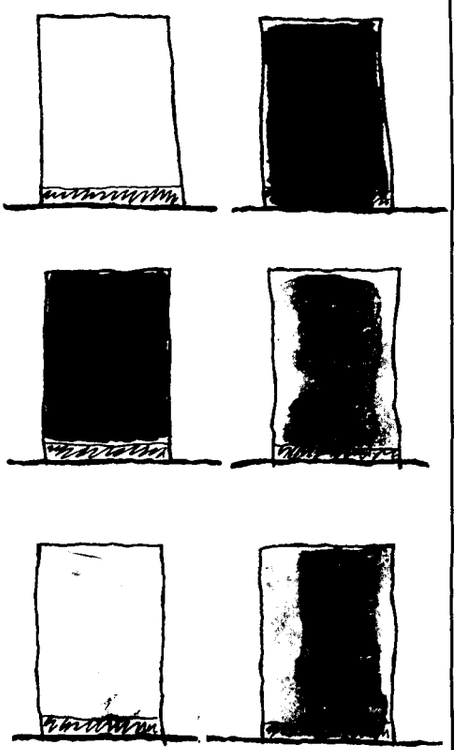
Steven Rose

The Blind Watchmaker
RICHARD DAWKINS *Longman* £12.95
God and the New Biology
ARTHUR PEACOCKE *Dent* £10.95
Origins: A Sceptic's Guide to the Creation of Life on Earth
ROBERT SHAPIRO *Heinemann* £12.95

IN A RECENT LECTURE at the Royal Society, Karl Popper scandalised a fair proportion of Britain's scientific elite by criticising the conventional version of modern Darwinism. Not that he was opposed to evolution (no one is, except creationists); but he argued for the replacement of the passive metaphor of natural selection by a concept of organisms actively selecting and creating their own future. Further, he distressed one portion of his audience by claiming that biology was irreducible to physics (on the grounds that biochemistry was irreducible to chemistry, the former science containing within it concepts of organisation and function which chemistry could not); and then enraged another portion by dismissing god as 'not his problem'.

These sideswipes would have antagonised the

EDWARD DE BONO
Six Thinking Hats



When you think, you often try to do too much at once. Dr de Bono shows a simple but effective way to become a better thinker, by separating thinking into six distinct modes, indentified by six 'thinking hats'.

By 'putting on a hat' you can focus your thinking; by 'switching hats', you can redirect your thinking. The more definite the thinking, the more productive the discussion.

Using real-life situations as examples, Dr de Bono explains clearly the way in which the 'thinking hats' concept leads to vast improvements in creative thinking, communication and decision-making.

£12.95

VIKING

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authors of all three of the books under review. Richard Dawkins' new text completes a trilogy which began with *The Selfish Gene* and is a full-throated defence of orthodox neoDarwinism. For Dawkins, not merely is natural selection the best hypothesis to account for evolution, it is the *only* possible one, derivable axiomatically from first principles. He robustly sees off creationists on the right and the spectrum of critics of his version of orthodoxy on the left.

The Blind Watchmaker derives its title from William Paley's famous 19th-century argument for the existence of god on the basis of design. For Dawkins, gradualist natural selection replaces god as the designer, albeit a designer responding only to the contingencies of the moment and incapable of foresight. Natural selection's motor is provided by competition amongst genes — strands of DNA — for replication; the replicator best adapted to its environment survives and leaves more copies of itself than its rivals. For this gene's-eye view of evolution, everything that happens at a 'higher' level than the gene, in organism, population or species, is merely epiphenomenal.

Dawkins writes with that magisterial certainty which tends to characterise the style of those of us educated in Britain's older universities, and he brings all the power of rhetoric, metaphor and computer-speak to his aid. In a largely unreferenced book, he elliptically castigates 'eminent astronomers', 'pompous colleagues' and 'deeply superficial' radicals. Doubtless insiders will have to decide for themselves which of Dawkins' offered dunce's caps fit them best.

There is much which is good and not merely clever about this book. But Dawkins' greatest problem is his continual tendency to allow himself to be dragged over the top by the very vigour of his own writing. For instance, he indignantly rejects the charge of being a 'reductionist' or biological determinist who believes that the living world is to be understood only in terms of the molecular structures of which is it composed. Indeed in his explanation of why DNA is at best a recipe and not a blueprint, he provides an excellent account of why and how reductionism fails. Yet he can't resist beginning a chapter, referring to a willow tree in seed: 'It is raining DNA . . . It is raining instructions out there; it's raining tree-growing, fluff-spreading algorithms. That is not a metaphor, it is the plain truth. It couldn't be any plainer if it were raining floppy discs.' This is beautiful and fallacious writing, not only profoundly reductionist, but, as he would himself put it, 'deeply superficial'.

Shapiro too writes elegantly, and with a more transatlantically egalitarian conception of what popularising science should be about. His book explores the current debates about the origin of life — not so much creationism or Fred Hoyle's space invaders, both of which are rapidly seen off — but ideas about volcanic or warm-water environments for prebiotic synthesis, and whether life could only be said to have begun when the first strand of DNA, the gene, or replicator, appeared. For Dawkins of course life can only be conceived of in terms of such genetic replicators; he is in the camp rather naughtily described by Shapiro as 'naked genies'. Shapiro shows clearly why the naked genie case fails; other models of how complex, cell-like structures capable of self-reproduction could have emerged, based on protein-like substances or even non-organic clays, seem more likely. Only relatively recently did a 'genetic takeover' by DNA occur. This is a fine piece of scientific explication, only marred by a reflex cold-warriorism which consistently diminishes the major contributions to origin-of-life models made by those, in the west and in the Soviet Union, working in a consciously Marxist framework.

Arthur Peacocke shares Dawkins' and Shapiro's apparent distaste for radical biologists. Stylistically pedestrian by comparison with the former two, Peacocke is both biochemist and Anglican priest, a rare combination even today, when some forms of Christianity are re-emerging among theoretical physicists (but it is easier, as Popper might agree, for theoretical physicists than biologists to believe three impossible things before breakfast, for we are constantly face-to-face with the intractable materiality of the living world). The first part of his book explains why, *pace* Dawkins, reductionism fails as a philosophical programme for explaining the world, whilst retaining its strength as a research *methodology*. The second explains why nonetheless Peacocke's type of Christianity is compatible with the findings of modern science, and indeed even with sociobiologising neoDarwinism. The third offers god, as a non-contingent variable. I'm with Peacocke all the way for part one, and unmoved by part two. As for the third part, as Karl Popper said, that's his problem. □

Steven Rose is professor of biology at the Open University; his most recent books include Not in our Genes *(Penguin, 1984) and* Science and Beyond *(Blackwell, 1986).*

What you're given

Alison Smith

My little sister, baton-twirler, smiled
and kicked and twirled each Saturday to win
five years of baton-twirling competitions,
limbs, wiry body flailing to deceive
the onlooker into thinking her thin
arms would never catch the stick, the quick wild
jerkings of her legs couldn't be precision;

that secret control harder to believe
now, as she sits pregnant and seventeen
watching the soap on the television,
her first baby's bones hardening to child
whose arms and legs will gain that same naive
freedom of what you do with what you're given;
baton-twirling from seven to eleven

FICTION: 1

Cutting the cord

Richard Deveson

Life is Elsewhere
MILAN KUNDERA trans. PETER KUSSI *Faber* £9.95

EXILE IS A KIND of vivisection: a pitiless, diagnostic experiment conducted on the living writer. It isn't a test that distinguishes greatness from mere excellence, but it does show that the writers who survive it tend to have something in common: a self-conscious, excogitated relation to their material.

Almost alone among the German Refugee Class of 1933, Thomas Mann rose triumphantly above exile to produce one of his greatest novels, *Doctor Faustus*. In a characteristic cognitive *tour de force* he was able to turn his equally characteristic personal preoccupations, and his personal fate, into a profound meditation on the European historical and artistic crisis. Of the two best-known Czech novelists to have been laid out on the vivisector's slab since 1968, Josef Škvorecký, as a verbal comedian and a nostalgic poet of youth, seems the more at risk: *The Engineer of Human Souls* was a valiant but disorganised attempt to write a way back from life in the West into the remembered Central European past. Milan Kundera, on the other hand, has a Mann-like ability to think his way forward from the personal into the universal. One of the fascinations of *Life is Elsewhere* — completed in Czechoslovakia in 1969, after *The Joke* and before *The Farewell Party* — is to see this survival skill prefigured: the creative self-consciousness that has subsequently stood Kundera in such good stead in his novels of exile.

The action of the novel concerns the brief life of the precocious youth Jaromil, whom his mother has moulded into a new Apollo in compensation for the lovelessness of her marriage. Jaromil is born in about 1929 (the same year as Kundera); he grows from an appallingly spoilt brat into an appallingly sensitive teenager; he starts writing lyric verse, heavy with sexual fantasy, which he shows to his devouring, doting Maman; as the 1948 communist 'revolution' approaches, he graduates to a sub-surrealistic poetry in which velocipedes ride over landscapes that are girls' bodies and haystacks that are their breasts. At the

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age of 18 he is a rabid Party zealot, reporting on the political lapses of his professors, but still trying to run away from his mother and find a girl to ease him of his virginity. He finds his girl; overnight, too, his poems become simple rhymed affirmations of tractor-driverhood. Maman puts up a struggle to hold on to him, but Jaromil seems fated to achieve a glorious Stalinist maturity. Alas, the glory is short-lived. A more glamorous girl helps to humiliate him and he undergoes a sorry, self-pitying parody of the lyric poet's early death — finally becoming his mother's exlusive property once again.

Kundera achieves a perfect balance here between narrative comedy, similar to that in *The Farewell Party*, and the disquisitional style — 20th-century existentialist out of 18th-century *philosophique* — that has become more marked in his later novels. There is a lot of insight (and probably a lot of autobiography) in his picture of adolescent turmoil: the longing for maturity and the retreat to the womb, the longing for solitary fame and the retreat to the herd. There is a lot of fun with the indignities of post-war underwear, and poetry readings for captive audiences of secret policemen. But what makes Kundera remarkable — and will arguably make him survive not only exile but the verdict of posterity — is the way he elevates his comedy into a picture of a fundamental attitude to human existence. The novel is not, in a sense, about Jaromil at all: it is about this attitude, what Kundera in a postscript calls the 'lyric attitude' — the quest for the absolute, in all its idealism, callowness and potential inhumanity. Kundera savages this attitude, but also captures its appeal in his own surrealistic interludes; Jaromil is a horror; it is also clear that there is more than enough of him in all of us.

I would take issue with Kundera on one point: he says that the book's setting in the period leading to the communist coup in Czechoslovakia is incidental to his primary existentialist purpose. But surely it's not every aspiring lyric poet who has the chance to come of age by delivering his girlfriend to the secret police? □

FICTION: 2

There was a ship

Justin Wintle

The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor
GABRIEL GARCIA MARQUEZ trans. RANDOLPH HOGAN *Cape* £8.95

FIRST AND FOREMOST Gabriel Garcia Marquez, whose *One Hundred Years of Solitude* won him the Nobel Prize in 1982, is a storyteller. Even in his most formally experimental novel, *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, which contains sentences of 30 or more pages, it is curiosity to learn more facts, more biographica, that keeps the reader wading through the ornamentally articulated prose swamp.

What sets Marquez apart from other skilled narrators, however, is the status he attaches to the fantastic. His loyalty to the observable world is never unambiguous. The necessary suspense is founded upon an uncertainty as to the efficacy of normal controls, whether natural or constructed. If he comes from a continent rife with political excess, then excess expresses itself, in Marquez, as an ironic disbelief in reality. His world, at once deeply imagined and carefully extrapolated, never just ticks over.

This again allies Marquez with the small company of truly inspired storytellers. Among this elect he stands closest to Conrad, who also elaborated a world, or found a corner of *the* world, where regularities are perpetually under pressure. The two writers have this in common as well: both, early in their careers, are drawn toward the short story, allegedly the most demanding of all narrative forms; and from the short story both evolve toward the novel proper via a midway staging post: the novella.

The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor belongs exactly to the transitory category, even though it is based on a 'true' incident and, as such, reveals another facet, often underplayed, of Marquez's persona: the Colombian journalist. An early work, now translated in the wake of his worldwide success, it certainly is more than a curiosity. Enjoyment of it is by no means restricted to the discovery of pointers toward the later fiction.

In February 1955 the Colombian destroyer *Caldas* set sail for home from Mobile, Alabama, where, for eight months, it had been in dry dock. On 28 February it ran into foul weather and several of the crew were swept overboard. Of these only Luis Alejandro Velasco survived. Ten days later he was washed ashore on a life raft. General Pinilla's government meanwhile had falsified events, exaggerating the adverse weather conditions and suppressing the fact that the warship was overladen with an illegal cargo.

At first Velasco was greeted and enriched as a hero. Then he 'sold' the 'truth' to the liberal *El Espectado*, where Marquez ghosted a 14-part serial. As a result, the paper was closed down and Velasco himself shunted into obscurity.

The Story of a Shipwrecked Sailor, though suspended within an illiberal climate, is scarcely a diatribe. Rather it is an example of Marquez's emerging art. Day by day we are taken through Velasco's ordeal. He eats nothing except three name cards, a slither of seagull's thigh and two mouthfulls of raw fish. The sharks gather and soon he is hallucinating. Sometimes he talks to his drowned comrades, sometimes he imagines himself back in Mobile, dancing with his girlfriend, Mary Address. The land, he thinks, should there be any, is teeming with cannibals.

There is nothing particularly new in all this, especially if you have already read *Pincher Martin*. Unlike Golding's book, however, Marquez's is written with the utmost simplicity, the utmost clarity, and it is this that indicates the better storyteller. 'Some people tell me this story is a fantasy,' Velasco signs off. 'And I ask them: If it is, then what did I do during my ten days at sea?' His is not the government version, but governments, Marquez suggests, are also capable of fantasising. Reality is frozen out, that is the condition of combat. □

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Help!

Chris Pearce, London E5
I am sure I am not alone in feeling profound unease at current attitudes among certain sections of the labour and trade union movement who represent themselves as being of the left.

It is a sad reflection on the movement in London and the South East that only about 2,000 people could be mustered on 2 November to welcome the Jarrow Marchers, while over 4,000 people spent that weekend at the Communist Party's Left Unlimited event participating in workshops on male sexuality, readings from Porky the Poet and playing Dialectic Pursuits. Meanwhile, a well-known trade union leader is currently featured in the November edition of *Vogue* holding forth to that magazine's well-heeled readership about the tortures of having to endure the Trades Union Congress in Blackpool without the consolation of the fine wines to which he has become accustomed and recounting tales of his wining and dining with top EEC bureaucrats and the delights of entertaining in expensive West End restaurants.

Meanwhile on the streets of London, manifestations of poverty and need are visible for all who care to look — the long silent queues outside Post Offices on benefit days, men, women and children walking the streets inadequately clothed to face the winter, increasing numbers of men and women living rough and old people whose pensions do not allow them the basic comforts of decent food and living conditions after a lifetime of hard work.

Such people are mocked at every turn by a society increasingly preoccupied with 'image', conspicuous consumption and the hedonistic pursuit of personal pleasures. And now its seems we have 'consumer socialism' — glossy, beautifully packaged and seemingly devoid of the guts and fight which previous generations of activists in the movement have displayed when faced with glaring social injustices. Those millions silently struggling to eke out a bare existence on what can be obtained from a contracting welfare state must be questioning where they should look for their representation in the face of such attitudes.

Missed the point

Diane Abbott, London N16
Jolyon Jenkin's article (*NS* 31 Oct.) about the current furore about Brent's anti-racist education policies entirely misses the point. The issue isn't the alleged martyrdom of Miss Goldrick, the issue is the very real plight of the children in Brent's schools. They are overwhelmingly black and working-class but the teachers and education bureaucrats are overwhelmingly white. I have numerous relatives in the area and I know exactly what Brent's schools have been doing to black children over the past decades.

But for decades black people in Brent have fought back — demanding action about the institutional racism in Brent's schools and to increase the pitifully small number of black teachers.

Finally, belatedly, Brent has taken action. The so called race spies were actually just classroom teachers — hopefully black. For its pains Brent has become the subject of an orchestrated media campaign. But your reporter makes no effort to establish the facts: instead he takes the Fleet St agenda, 'loony-left anti-racists' and embroiders on the theme. So *New Statesman* readers are left none the wiser.

And, while Jolyon Jenkins lines up with Fleet St and the Tory party to defend Miss Goldrick, black people are left wondering — who will speak up for our children?

Dealing with the servants

Diana Eden, London SW17
Re John Rentoul's excellent article (*NS* 7 Nov.): as one who has never employed a domestic servant but has often been one, may I venture a suggestion to ease the unquiet conscience of the Leftish Hiring Class? Work out how much your household earns per hour (excluding holidays, weekends and May Days — just divide your wage by your working hours per week) and pay your char *that* hourly rate. I would also encourage the suppression of the following sentiments, both addressed to me by socialist employers: 'Would you stay to let the new nanny in, it's (*sic*) arriving at two o'clock?' and: 'Leave the supper dishes for tomorrow's woman to do — I suspect she *relishes* washing up.' Both employers, by the way, were women.

Men *can* change

Jackie Morrison, Canarth, Lanark
I must respond to Helen Birch (*NS* 31 Oct.). Is she really saying that there is no such thing as an honest non-sexist male? If she really believes that, and that we are all incapable of change, she is writing for the wrong publication and should go to work for one of the 'libertarian' publications (the *Salisbury Review*, perhaps).

If socialism means anything, surely it means change, and some men *have* changed. Not nearly enough of course, but then look at the number of people who read the *Sun* and up here the *Sunday Post*, and believe every bloody word. Is the feminist position not that these predominantly working-class women can, and must, be liberated psychologically as well as sociologically?

It's pretty perverse logic that says that women can be changed from those entrenched positions brought on by society but that any man trying to liberate himself is probably a dirty bastard just trying to get into your pants.

In short, we (and by that I mean socialists) must oppose the position that 'male' equals 'sexist' — and 'white' equals 'racist' for that matter — otherwise we might as well just pack it in.

Jay Jackson ('no one in particular')
Helen Birch's article was a very sad, very negative article. To deny validity to the 'men's movement' is fair enough, but to deny the validity of men being moved at all by feminism is against her own cause. If being 'nice to women' is 'just fashionable' or 'a badge', then feminists might as well stop selling books, stop talking and resign themselves to a stagnant, static world. Because moving women to change is not an end in itself. Men, by their very existence, have to be a variable in the feminist equation, and unless we change, the feminist equation will never balance.

Selbourne — keep talking

Bill Thompson, Cambridge
So, let me get this right: John Lloyd (*NS* 31 Oct.) believes that the Selbourne/Ruskin case is not, in fact, worth bothering about — 'true and pure liberals have better subjects'. Does he believe that the leader writers on *The Times* will now turn their attention from an affair which is potentially embarrassing for the left, because he has pronounced it *boring*?

Selbourne *is* important — a focal point for the dilemmas facing us all over collective action, freedom and fairness, responsibility — many issues. Lloyd believes that Ruskin should defend Selbourne, but neglects to mention that the colleges must defend the students' right to picket lectures. He cavorts through a list of events, presents a conclusion (with no argument), and then tells us to forget the whole issue. I can see both sides, but am also finding the debate around the issue to be lively, useful and stimulating. I may finally sort out some of my ideas — if Lloyd will permit me!

Insight is dead

Alan Leadbetter, Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent
Before Rupert Murdoch acquired the *Sunday Times* and appointed Andrew Neil as editor, 'Insight' did what is normally associated with the phrase 'investigative journalism' — sought out facts and ideas that government and officials did not particularly want us to have access to, and so helped some 'dissident' views that otherwise would stay suppressed.

Under Rupert Murdoch and Andrew Neil, 'Insight' does exactly the opposite — supports the government and officials and hounds dissidents.

'Insight' before Neil would not be tolerated by any totalitarian government. 'Insight' under Neil would be welcomed by any totalitarian government with open arms.

For Neil to say (Letters 31 Oct.) that in the *Sunday Times* investigative journalism is still alive is to miss the point.

Temps perdu

Dermod Quirke, Newark, Notts
Now that yuppies have hijacked the *Statesman*, I suppose there's nothing surprising in your food columnist reviewing a restaurant in the £55-a-head bracket. But having myself had to live on a weekly dole of precisely half that sum, I confess that I found Colin Spencer's article (*NS* 31 Oct.) quite shocking.

In the same issue, David Walker writes that 'to re-cast Labour as a successful conservative party' is 'not an oxymoron'. As a matter of fact, that is *precisely* what it is. Presumably he means that it is not a contradiction in terms; but he doesn't like using such commonplace language, so he scratches around for an obscure word to dazzle us with. Half your readers will have no

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idea of what 'oxymoron' means; the other half will realise that David Walker has no idea what it means.

But in an article devoted to rehabilitating the old obfuscator Harold Wilson, clarity and precision of language would be out of place. Perhaps that's why Walker also writes that, under the Tories, 'few [of Britain's problems] have been solved, let alone tackled' — a sentence which sounds good until you try to analyse it . . .

Of course, now that you're aiming at a yuppie readership, slovenly expression is a positive advantage — it conceals sloppy ideas and woolly principles. But I mourn for the clarity and commitment of the old *Statesman* under Bruce Page and Hugh Stephenson.

Generation gap

Liz Heron, London, N16

In her eagerness to attack my book (*NS* 7 Nov.) Jane Miller distorts it beyond recognition. Contrary to what she implies, I am well aware of the many social and economic inequalities that weigh against women's attempts at personal change. In *Changes of Heart* I tried to draw attention to how much these are underestimated. Jane Miller's unfounded assertion that I expect women to 'try harder' and transform their lives and relationships single-handed, and her snide remarks about my alleged 'nostalgia for the old unities' of the women's movement add up to dishonest criticism.

Sometimes it is hard to reconcile a fair account of a book with a strong negative prejudice. Jane Miller is inconsistent in her hostility; she claims I expect too much of women while voicing her own impatience with those who describe finding change more difficult than they had imagined. The implicit reference is to certain experiences and expectations of Seventies feminism. The suggestion is that those hopes were mere presumption — the presumption of a generation younger than her own?

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David Pocock, The Library, University of Sussex, Brighton, BN1 9QL

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REDS & GREENS — Public Discussion. What To Do About the Nuclear Trains? Speakers: Janice Owens (Green Party), Dave Cook (Communist Party). 7.45 p.m. Clapham Baths, Clapham Manor St, SW4. Org. Clapham Communist Party.

SOCIALIST SOCIETY SEMINAR, 8 p.m. The Old Coffee House, Beak St, London W1. This week: Michelle Barratt, Anne Phillips and Lorna Weir (Toronto), authors of *The Politics of Diversity*, on 'Feminism, Marxism, Nationalism'.

WED 19 NOV

BRIAN GOULD MP on 'Labour & The City after The Big Bang'. House of Commons, 7.30 p.m. Central London Fabian Society. Details Elliott Miller 01-673 0467.

FRI 21 NOV

HISTORY WORKSHOP celebrates its 20th Anniversary at Leeds, Choice of a hundred workshops. Peace strand includes James Hinton on Peace Movements' Politics & Sheila Rowbotham on Alice Wheeldon. Cost: £7, £2.50, or £1, payable to: HW 20. Further details send sae to HW 20, Adult Education Centre, University, Leeds LS2 9JT.

PUBLIC MEETING. Law and Order — A Socialist View. Speakers: Rt Hon. Gerald Kaufman MP — Shadow Home Secretary, Christine Collette Labour's PPC for Witney. 7.30 p.m. Town Hall, Woodstock. Org. Witney CLP.

CONFERENCE

BUILDING AN ALLIANCE for Socialism. Weekend Conference with Tony Benn, Diane Abbott, Linda Bellos, Ken Livingstone, ANC, Sinn Fein and many more. 22/23 Nov., 10 a.m. Sir William Collins School, Charrington St, London NW1. Organised by Socialist Action, P.O. Box 50, London N1. £3.50 day/£6 weekend.

CHURCH ACTION ON POVERTY
National Conference
28-30 November
KEEPING POVERTY ON THE AGENDA
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THE ATTACK ON THE BBC AND THE NEED FOR MEDIA REFORM:
A MANIFESTO FOR THE MEDIA!
Speakers:
Norman Buchan MP, **Don Brind** NUJ, BIC, **Paddy Leach** BETA, **Preethi Manuel** CPBF Black Group, **Liz Short** SOGAT. Chair: **Loretta Loach** CPBF.
Thursday 20 Nov. 8 p.m. Holborn Library Hall, 32-38 Theobalds Rd, London WC1.
Campaign for Press & Broadcasting Freedom in association with SE Region TUC.

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BACKCHAT

FIRST PERSON

Traveller's return

Liz Heron

TRAVEL WRITING has probably never had it so good since Marco Polo. Even as the world axiomatically shrinks, for the literary traveller its generic possibilities expand: reportage, autobiography, high adventure, social satire and history-in-the-making, always components of the travel book or essay, have been refined into distinct authorial hallmarks.

A journey is a pretext for the elaboration of countless themes. Among them one might expect the emergence of a genre derived from the traveller's homecoming. The planet's geography holds fewer and fewer unexplored pockets; meanwhile, *home* ceases to be a fixed point, a stable haven of return.

I love to travel and I've done so with enough regularity since my childhood, to what was then called 'the Continent', to welcome the feeling of cultural dislocation that ensues, the energising new perspectives. No, I'm not talking about a packaged fortnight in a high-class hotel, but of things at least a little more rich and strange.

The strangeness has always come back with me. Last time I arrived at Heathrow from abroad the man behind the LT window asked me to repeat my request for a ticket with an exaggerated mouthing of words that mutely suggested he thought I was a foreigner. I felt as disoriented as I must have looked. The shock of the old. As a Scot who first moved across the Channel before coming to live in England, another foreign country, I've always wavered on the brink of cultural identity crisis at moments of definitive return, reluctant to accept that this place can really be home. A reluctance of course heightened by regret for all that England would lack: the food and wine, the cafés, the sun, the more civilised, less utilitarian everyday life.

In the past, reluctance was mingled with relief. When the doors banged shut and the boat slid into the Kent countryside I would clutch my talismanic cup of British Rail tea and feel the consolatory safety of being *home*. Who does not savour that sense of belonging that is so difficult to reach in a foreign country which, no matter how welcoming, cannot help but exclude by reason of the stranger's own separation from its remembered history and the cultural empathy that comes from generations of shared ephemera.

And Britain seemed a kinder place to be, a place where you'd be taken care of if you needed to, supported on the solid rock of the welfare state, and where some of the basic and important things weren't measured out in money. Public services compared favourably with most of 'the Continent': trains that ran on time and were comfortable, better plumbing, a telephone system that worked and a cleaner environment.

Faith in the power of the NHS to deliver the best kind of care died hard. Likewise faith in the well regulated character of British institutions. It was in the outward things that decay became apparent. The trains got grimier and, now, travelling on the Southern Region reminds me of France or Italy 20 years ago: unwashed windows and no water in the toilets. Then Britain seemed modern by comparison. Now our public services are moving backwards in time. It's funny really to travel on the high-speed, high comfort TGV that joins Paris to the south and know we have nothing like it. A reverse image of past superiority.

Approached from Europe, London makes the heart sink. I was depressed by the dirtiness of its streets earlier this year when I got back from a trip to northern Italy, where standards of public hygiene, as well as living standards, are higher. I hadn't quite noticed how squalid this city had become until then, what an air of neglect it had. *City Limits* recently asked a variety of metropolitan notables and pressure groups how they'd like to see London improved. Peter Hall proclaimed it 'the dirtiest and tattiest European capital'. Smiley Culture said, 'Abroad is a lot cleaner.' 'Filthy,' 'Clean it up,' pronounced others. Clean streets and an efficient public transport system seem like basic requirements of a city that has any respect for its inhabitants. Coming home to a capital that has neither reminds you immediately of all the other things that are wrong.

Coming home, and looking with eyes temporarily sharpened before the illusion of normality closes in again, must now reveal a country of narrowing yet proliferating exclusions — of race, of class, of north and south, of traditional kinds of privilege hardening and new ones dawning; even style, seen as subcultural subversion in the Seventies, now reeks of a super-cool snobbery. *Home* comes to occupy an ever diminishing territory of the imagination. Where you belong but where there's less and less of what you thought belonged to you.

There's no need to fly off somewhere sunny to be aware of all this. But that doesn't reckon with how much we adapt as a way of coping with lowered expectations. Everday life assumes a certain inevitability and this normality only cracks when it becomes unbearable for those at its roughest edges. For many of us more bound to respectability and the law by relative material security, the Eighties have been the psychological equivalent of living with a permanent heavy cold. You stop imagining what it would be like not have it.

Could this be the reason why those of us who can afford to go on holiday leave the country in increasing numbers? Not just because of the weather and other enticements, but the need to be somewhere else, to clear the head and breathe freely for a fortnight.

My own flight to the sun took me to Greece this year, out of season. There, one night in late September, on the Peloponnese coast, I came across two young women who reminded me of some of the things I was escaping from. In the small moonlit square beneath the towering rock of Monemvasia, an old walled town now partially restored by wealthy individual buyers, they set up a busking pitch under the trees. A baby lay asleep beside them and another child played as they went through a repertoire that began with 'Scarborough Fair' and included Irish rebel songs and some folky numbers with pointedly feminist lyrics. The small audience of mainly French and German tourists gave a frosty reception at first, disconcerted by this unlikely apparition, then mellowed with the sweetness of the music. More and more money went into the hat.

Fed up with life on the dole, they had left Edinburgh a year ago, after living on one giro and saving the other until they had enough money to get their van across the Channel. They'd busked for food and petrol after that. Greece, where they'd been longest, was the easiest, the most hospitable country. The big van was the children's security while they were on the move. With their flute and guitar, their cropped hair and identical tie-dyed cotton shifts, they were incongruous and unexpected in that setting, but radiant with sun, good health and good humour. They were, they said, having a wonderful time. Life on the road was treating them well.

There's no place like home. □

Liz Heron's most recent book, Changes of Heart, *has just been published by Pandora.*

"Richard, please — no ethnic or sexist jokes. I strongly disapprove of them unless they're very, very funny."

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FOOD

Festive fish

Colin Spencer

IT IS SOMEWHAT astonishing that Christmas unbelievers, atheists and agnostics, humanists and traditional Scrooges, still end up by celebrating the wretched festival. It is, of course, mainly because everything stops for two weeks and, if you have children, you are blackmailed into doing something and, once begun, end up doing the lot.

My indifference to and suspicion of this festival stems, I admit, from the fact that the Christmas holiday, as a child, was without magic; it was the interval when my parents tortured each other in Strindberg fashion. Ever since then I have stepped through Christmas with the utmost caution, cringing at the blatant commercialism where autumn sales fuse with cardboard reindeer, and choose not to celebrate it by slaughtering an overfed fowl which could give you salmonella poisoning if not thoroughly cooked and certainly bears a resemblance to compacted sawdust.

Christmas has become, for many of us, merely a winter break in which strenuous walks are made enjoyable by the thought that, once back home, an excellent claret can be opened. Odd that the Christian ideology on these few days has only bequeathed to us humanists the fact that indulgence is permissible. The further irony is that our own principles often narrow the area of indulgence. Roast beef, the main alternative to the turkey for Christmas lunch, is, in my view, sensibly avoided, whether on grounds of health or morality; and if we are going to be thorough, one should be suspicious of the additives, plus sugar, which are in wine and, under the present inadequate laws, not declared on the label. Some of us might get so over-anxious that we suffer from a coronary while rushing to the health stores. Most of us though, at one point, say to hell with it, while spooning out the saturated fat and downing a glass of E numbers.

It should be possible to cook a celebratory meal, fairly economically, of real food which is based either on fish or vegetables or both. You can order from a fishmonger a large sea bass, turbot or halibut and bake it in foil with butter and herbs in the oven. If you order salmon, it will be farmed (though in Ireland you could be lucky, as the season for wild salmon starts in January there) and, if the flesh is veined pale yellow, it is fatty and the flavour will be inferior. In that case, you could pickle the fish as below. The vitamin C (ascorbic acid) cuts across the fattiness of the farmed salmon and is the perfect answer. Or you could make a gravlax out of it, but be careful not to over-salt the fish and make sure the flesh is submerged in the marinade or else it will dry out. Both these recipes are worth trying with a dense white fish like the ones mentioned above as well as monkfish, or the more economical dog fish, quite often called cat fish or rock salmon. This is uncommonly good pickled and guests never dream that it is one of the cheaper fish. The best recipe for gravlax, by the way, is the simplest as used in the markets of Norway, but for that you must buy wild salmon. Fillet it, sprinkle the flesh with coarse sea salt and masses of chopped, fresh dill, roll up the fish tightly and leave for one day in the refrigerator. Unwrap and wipe the salt and dill away, then slice the fish thinly. Any other recipe for gravlax is a form of pickling where the fish is cold cooked. The recipe above ensures the flesh is still raw.

If you cannot afford a whole fish, use cutlets of good fish and cook them in a different way.

Marinated Salmon

10fl oz (285ml) dry white wine
2tbsp salt
Juice and zest of 2 oranges and 2 lemons (or more)
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1tsp ground white pepper
4fl oz (120ml) walnut oil (or sunflower seed oil)

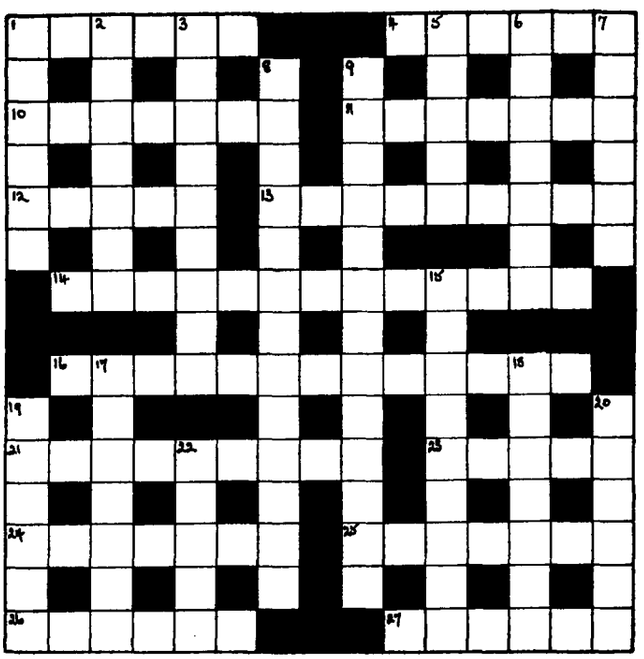
Skin, bone and trim middle cut of salmon to provide 12×2oz (55g) steaks. Cover these with the above marinade. The salmon is ready after 6 hours, at its best after 12 hours and will keep 3 or 4 days in the refrigerator but loses flavour and becomes tough. Serves 12.

Gravlax

1 farmed salmon, cleaned, scaled, deboned and bisected lengthways (the fishmonger will do this for you)
2tbsp sea salt
2tbsp caster sugar
2tbsp mixed white and black peppercorns
1 large bunch dill, chopped
1 glass brandy

Weekend Crossword 1538

PRIZE: £10 Book Token for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1538, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 25 November.



Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

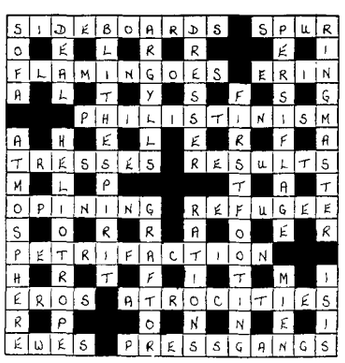
1. Handed over about a pound for one of these bits of cloth (6)
4. When green does not give the clear go-ahead? (6)
10. Against having borders in it for colour (7)
11. When there is a cause of fighting in a senior school, they hold the coats (7)
12. General without love or money (5)
13. Seriously having to make a home among first arrivals (9)
14. The romantic mooch about looking pale? (13)
16. It is a terrible school, but the young man is bound to go to the party (9,4)
21. Entertainer who has the country at heart (9)
23. One creature would include a hundred in this figure (5)
24. The balls to be bowled are not on time (7)
25. Meantime in winter I miss the sunshine (7)
26. Perform in evening dress in a warehouse (6)
27. Makes short work of rogues (6)

DOWN

1. Calm down if in the grasp of those who get a move on (6)
2. Excited when a goat goes wild about it (7)
3. Outmanoeuvre the godly as a means of cleanliness (9)
5. A touch of colour seen in a painting exhibition (5)
6. Tears about in the main road to discover leading musicians (7)
7. Attempts works of literature (6)
8. Victor beheaded in front of a man and his wives somewhere in Scotland (5,8)
9. I'm macho and trendy, being made up of heat and energy (13)
15. A man is kept inside a small room for being against religion (9)
17. The product of rape does lie badly (7)
18. Desire and drink gets one five years (7)
19. Figure to make a former pupil feel desire (6)
20. Impresses as material for collectors (6)
22. Provide support in trying to repair a broken down car (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1536



Prizewinner to 1536

K. E. Jermy
Churchdown, Glos.

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Lay one side of the fish, skin side down, in a glass dish. Combine all the ingredients except the brandy and rub them into the fish, then pour over the brandy, cover with the other side of the salmon, skin side up. Find a weight to place on top of the fish and refrigerate for 3 days, turning the fish over every 12 hours and basting with the juices.

Slice the salmon as if it were smoked, scraping off the salt mixture. Serves 12.

Salmon in Spinach Parcels
4 cutlets salmon
8 large spinach leaves
1 bunch dill
juice of 1 lemon
butter for greasing the dish
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Blanch the spinach leaves and chop the dill finely. Lay each cutlet of salmon on top of a spinach leaf (you may need 2 depending on the size of the cutlet and the leaf), season well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, then cover generously with the chopped dill. Wrap the leaf around the fish so that it is completely covered. Butter an oven dish. Preheat the oven to 400F/200C/Gas Mark 6. Lay the spinach parcels in the oven and cover with foil. Place in the oven for 25 minutes. Serves 4.

Gratin of Scampi and Avocado
1½lb (680g) shelled scampi tails
2oz (55g) butter
flesh of 1 ripe avocado
pinch of nutmeg
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
5floz (140ml) single cream
3oz (85g) grated gruyère

Melt the butter in a gratin dish and sauté the scampi in it for 4 to 5 minutes. Dice the flesh from the avocado and stir it into the dish. Add the nutmeg and seasoning, then pour in the cream, stir again and bring it to simmering point. Sprinkle the top with the grated gruyère and pop under a hot grill to brown slightly. Serve with plain boiled rice. Serves 6.

Scallops with Ginger and Honey
18 scallops (allow 3 per person)
½ pint (285ml) fish stock
2oz (55g) fresh ginger root, finely grated
¼ pint (140ml) shoyu sauce (Japanese soya)
2 tbsp clear honey
butter for greasing

First make the sauce. Bring the fish stock to the boil in a saucepan and simmer the ginger root in it for about 5 minutes, then add the shoyu and honey. Stir until the honey is dissolved.

Heat the grill to high. Butter a large shallow flameproof gratin dish. Lay the scallops in it, pour over the hot sauce and place under the grill, basting the scallops twice. Grill for 3 minutes, then turn the scallops and grill for a further 2 minutes. Serves 6. □

Next month: vegetable recipes for Christmas lunch.

Weekend competition

No 2950 **Set by E. O. Parrott**
Sex . . . calm down; would you please just listen . . . sex can be enjoyed in a number of ways: so could we please have a *Which*-type report on the advantages/disadvantages of various sexual activities. Max. 150 words by 26 November.

No 2947 **Set by E. O. Parrott**
Sonnets 'On first looking at *The Independent*'.

Report **By Rosie Hughes**
It's time for a kiss-and-make-up, my dears. First, Babe Bio should give a big hug to poor old Gerard Benson: *anybody* might make a muddle of Dutney and Pulwich, you know — and, besides, he has apologised handsomely. Second, with reference to the stinging message from Alison Prince to dear Rose Dorn on the bottom of her this week's entry: don't you think, Ali, you might have been a little too vicious? It may not be *immediately* apparent, but Rose is really quite a delicate blossom. So how about great big cuddles all round — and on to your sonnets on *The Independent*. Thirty-four per cent of you sneer at this first new serious paper for decades (or is it centuries? I keep forgetting), 39 per cent of you are smitten and 27 per cent of you are waiting to see where it goes from here. (And twelve per cent of you wouldn't know a sonnet, I'm afraid to say, from a haiku.) Ten pounds per poet for the entries below and £2 only to Keith Norman for the following closing couplet:

While colleagues looked on with a mild surprise,
All silenced by a peek at Francis Wheen.

Much have I travelled in the Street of Shame,
Many a daring innovation tried
And valiantly taken in my stride
The baffling shifts and tactics of the game.
The more they changed, the more they stayed the same.
Disheartened, we might lurch from side to side,
But most of them swam bravely with the tide,
Until the seventh of October came.

It is; we are; and very soon — who knows? — we
May well discover everything we seek.
Births, marriages and deaths apart, how rosy
Is now the prospect that was once so bleak.
Renouncing both Portfolio *and* Posy
We stand to save ourselves three pounds a week.
M. R. MACINTYRE

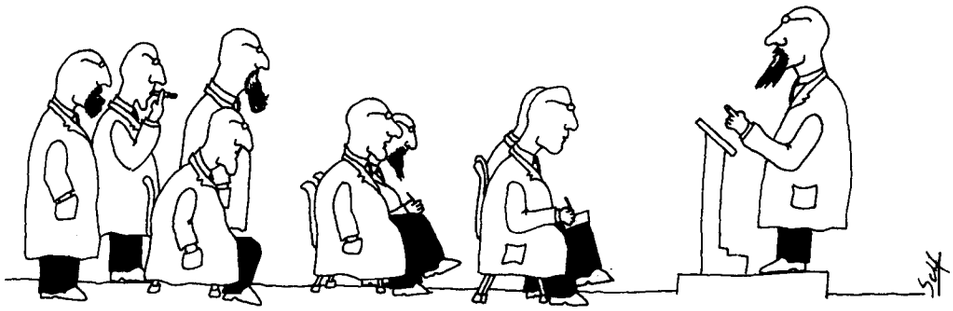
The Independent has the look and feel
Of mind-anaesthetising 'common sense',
That even-handed, dull and dim appeal
To those who love to sit upon the fence.
I read an interview with David Steel,
The little man whose brain is not immense.
I read the gossip column: no big deal.
I read the sports reports: not worth two cents.

After a while, I feel that I'm not real,
But just a rumour without evidence.
The vivid motions of the world congeal
Into a foggy vapour, grey and dense.
Where is the colour, dynamism, flux?
Let's face it, folks: *The Independent* sucks.
BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Many a newspaper have I explored,
From those with a notorious page 3
To others aimed at lesser levity;
Have travelled much from this realm to Abroad
And over foreign newsprint often pored,
Hoping it will make sense eventually.
Yet seldom, till surveying pensively
The Independent, have I felt so bored.
A wide expanse I note with eager eyes
Lacks misprints, so at once let it be said
One welcomes, these days, such a rare surprise.
Damned faintly, though, by what got left unread;
The Independent staff, too, I'd surmise.
Yawn long before they're putting it to bed.
MONICA G. RIBON

Beijing is the whore-house of the soapstone horse,
Whose kitsch, replicate Tang-appeal appals.
And yet, among all that, it is the source
Of something rare and wondrous — Healthy Balls.
Packed in cigar-brown box, they make a sound
Intriguing as a laugh behind a door,
A tinkling, tea-house chime within their round
Metallic heaviness — what are they *for*?
A Chinese shop assistant demonstrates
Their use, rotating them in one quick hand,
Thus bringing health. This wonder surely rates
A line or two in our barbaric land!
But Fenton, in the *Independent* way
Was first. They've got the balls, as one might say.
ALISON PRINCE

For fifty years I floundered in the night
Until, a beacon to my mental fog,
I saw the youthful, *Independent* light
Of Reason, Truth and William Rees-Mogg.
What measured style! What wise, judicious views!
What sober, balanced, philosophic leaders!
What's On. What's In. And just enough Court news
To drop a hint of O-so-gentle readers.
With such a mentor I might boldly press
My claim to join that golden yuppie club.
Professional? Well, I'm paid. Urban? I guess
I might squeeze in. But young? Ah, there's the rub.
Too late, alas. But still, in life's September,
I might become a sort of country member.
NOEL PETTY



'I have a wet dream'

Incorporating 'The Nation', 'The Athenaeum' and 'The Week-end Review'. Registered as a newspaper. Typesetting by Tocatta Graphics, Tabard House, 116 Southwark Street, London SE1
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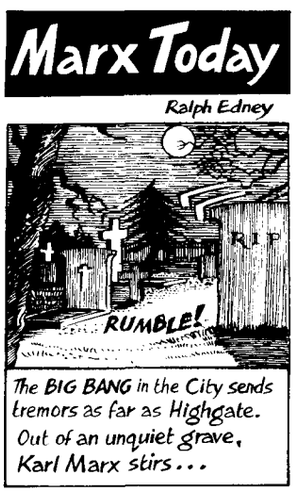
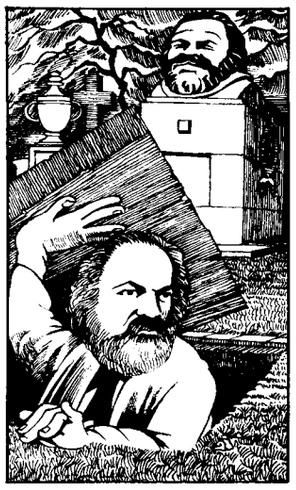
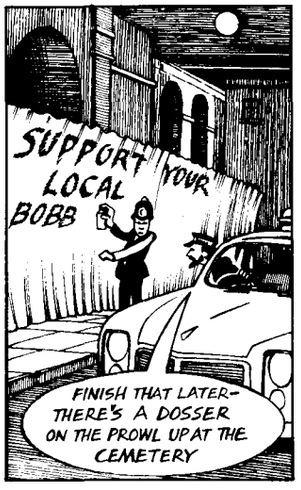

Marx Today
Ralph Edney
R I P
RUMBLE!
The BIG BANG in the City sends tremors as far as Highgate. Out of an unquiet grave, Karl Marx stirs...





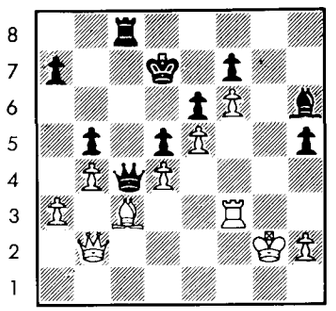
Chess

THE WORLD junior championship provides fairly reliable omens of success at the senior level. Previous winners who have reached the top rank are Spassky, Karpov, Beliavsky, Miles, Yusupov, Seirawan, Kasparov, and Sokolov.

The organisers of this year's championship at Gausdal in Norway must have been optimistic about the prospects of a home victory for Simen Agdestein, at 19 already a grandmaster with an ELO rating of 2545. But even GM teenagers have young rivals to fear. Stiff opposition was to be expected from the Russian junior, Eugeny Bareyev, who had shown his strength with a high placing in the 1986 USSR championship.

Simen got off to a faltering start, but hauled himself back into contention to set up an exciting last round in which the top pairings were: Bareyev (8½) v Agdestein (8) and Klinger (8½) v Arancibia (8). Bareyev-Agdestein was a nervy game. Everything seemed to be going according to plan for the Russian — an extra pawn, better position, and Agdestein under clock-pressure. Then Bareyev froze over the board and slid into time-trouble himself. Even after a few inaccuracies he still had an easy draw, but tried for more, blundered and lost.

In the meantime, however, the fate of the championship was being decided on another board, in the game between Klinger (Austria) and Arancibia (Cuba).



When Klinger played **31. Be1**, scheming to win the Black Queen with 32. Rc3, the Cuban countered with a tricky idea: **31 . . . h4!?** A sneaky way to win a world title. White could simply play 32. Bxh4! **32. Rc3? Rg8+ 33. Bg3 h3+! 34. Kf3** Better, though not good, was 34. Kf2 Qxd4+. **Qf1+ 35. Qf2 Qd1+ 36. Qe2 Rxg3+ 37. hxg3 Qxe2+ 0-1,** since after 38. Kxe2 h2 Black gets a new Queen.

So Agdestein and Walter Arancibia tied for first with 9½. It was the Cuban who got the title, in virtue of having won their individual encounter during the Norwegian's bad patch at the start. But in the long run Agdestein's psychological edge over Bareyev may well be of more value than the junior title.

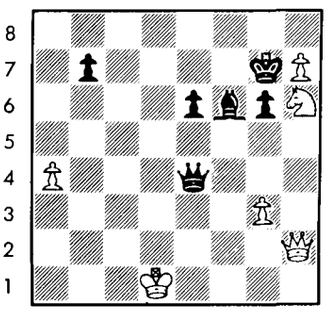
Since many important games are decided by quick thinking under clock-pressure it makes sense to gain practice in this area through playing training tournaments at reduced time-limits. An hour per player for the whole game is a suitable allowance. Here is a bright little game between two Welsh internationals, played last month in a tournament in which this time-limit made it possible to cram 9 rounds into a single weekend:

Paul Lamford — Iolo Jones, Swansea 1986. Scotch Gambit.

1. e4 e5 2. d4 exd4 3. Nf3 Nc6 4. Bc4 Bb4+?! Iolo carries his affection for pawns too far. 4 . . . Nf6 and 4 . . . Bc5 are better moves. **5. c3 dxc3 6. bxc3** 6. 0-0 is strong too. **Ba5 7. Qb3 Qe7 8. 0-0 d6** White has an Evans Gambit position enhanced by the absence of a Black pawn on d4. **9. e5 dxe5 10. Ba3 Qf6 11. Re1 Nge7 12. Nxe5! Nxe5 13. Qb5+ N7c6 14. Bd5 Be6!** Resourceful defence based on the tactical points 15. Rxe5 0-0-0! and 15. Qxb7 Bxd5!. **15. Bxc6+ bxc6 16. Qxa5 Nd3 17. Rf1 Qe5 18. Qa4 Bd5 19. Nd2 Qf4 20. c4 Qg4 21. f3 Qd4+ 22. Kh1 Nf2+ 23. Rxf2 Qxa1+ 24. Rf1 Qd4 25. Qb4?** Whilst conducting a furious attack don't forget that your opponent might bale out by castling! The winning line for White was 25. Re1+ Kd8 26. Rd1 Re8 27. Nf1! Qf2 28. cxd5 Re1 29. dxc6+ Ke8 30. Rxe1+ Qxe1 31. Qc4 Rd8 32. h3! Rd1 33. Kh2 Qxf1 34. Qe4+ Kd8 35. Be7+ Kc8 36. Qg4+ and mates. **0-0-0! 26. cxd5 ½-½.** Both players thought the endgame after 26 . . . Qxb4 27. Bxb4 cxd5 would be too much of an anti-climax.

Problem

White to play and win. A classic study — Kaminer's 1935 'Knight of the long forks'.



Solution

1. h8=Q+ Kxh8 2. Ng4+ Kg7 3. Qh7+! Kf8 4. Qg8+! Ke7 5. Qe8+! Kd6 6. Qd7+! Kc5 7. Qb5+ Kd6 or 7 . . . Kd4 8. Qb4+ with a fork on f6 or f2 to follow. **8. Qb6+ Ke7 9. Qc7+ Kf8 10. Qc8+ Ke7 11. Qd7+! Kf8 12. Qe8! Kg7 13. Qg8+! Kxg8 14. Nxf6+** and wins.

George Botterill

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This England

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☐ Chamber of Trade president Mr Jim Gallagher told members 'Henley could have its very own "big bang"'. If Henley-on-Thames wants commercial success, these very major changes may have to be accepted. 'A town full of fast food take-aways, that is a sure sign of a town that is firmly in the 20th Century'. — *Henley Standard* (H. Woodward)

☐ Imports of Perrier water should be re-routed via Aberdeen for chemical analysis in retaliation for the hijacking of British lamb by French farmers, Mr Phillip Oppenheim (C. Amber Valley) suggested during Commons Question Time. — *Daily Telegraph* (George Moor)

☐ The new Home Office Minister for Prisons, the Earl of Caithness, yesterday visited Leeds Prison, which is the most over-crowded in the country with 1,288 inmates in cells built for 642, and said conditions were better than he expected, adding: 'Some prisoners actually prefer being three to a cell.' — *Guardian* (B. Jackson)

☐ Finding the right stars for the Tory Party has not been easy. As Mr John Biffen told friends at this year's party conference: 'Central Office has been casting about like crazy for some top-heavy coal miner's daughter to take on Billy Bragg.' — *The Times* (Leonard Cox)

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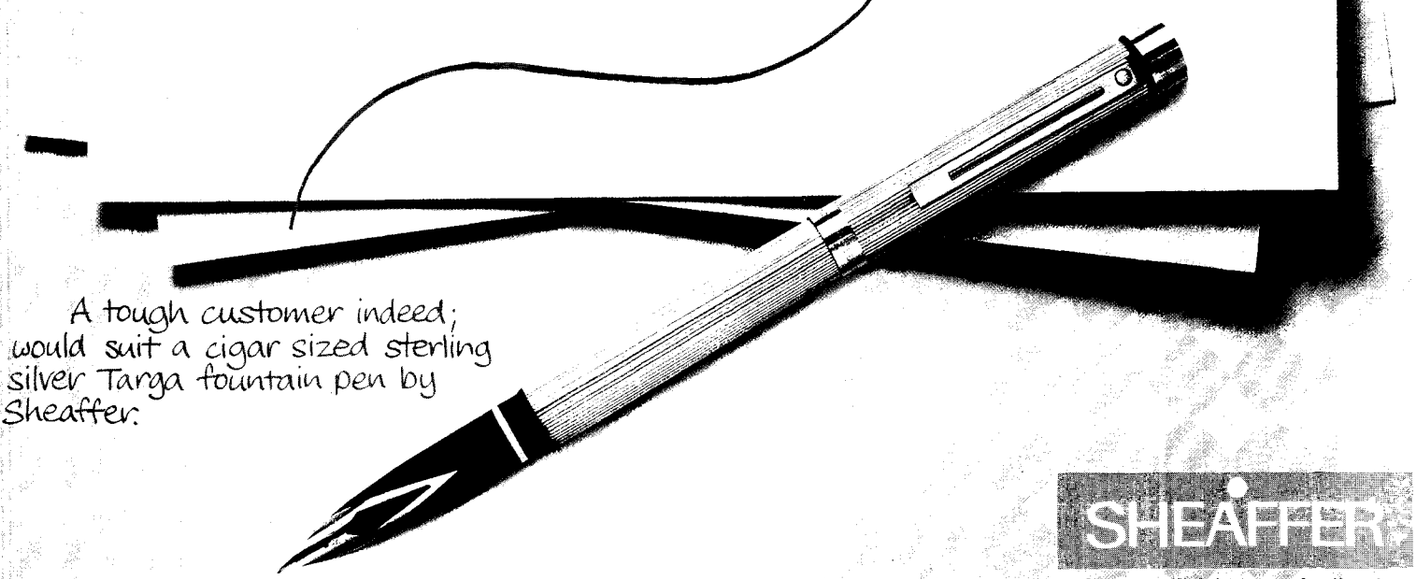

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